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E. Petersen

The Chamber of Commerce as a
Community Builder



THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AS A
COMMUNITY BUILDER

BY

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PREFACE

The chamber of commerce movement in community affairs is receiving greater attention today than ever before. Cities and towns throughout the length and breadth of this country are spending large sums of money, and men and women otherwise engaged in business and professional activities for themselves are giving large portions of their time to foster organizations of this type. A new profession has come into being--that of chamber of commerce secretary, and men are leaving other callings to enter this new field, a field that is technical and specialized, yet which, because of its newness, perhaps, has not been given the serious thought and careful study of scholars of research that it deserves.

It is because of the very apparent lack of organized and comprehensive literature on the subject that the present author has been moved to direct himself to a careful inquiry into the subject of the chambers of commerce of this country: their history, ideals, purposes, and methods of operation. It is hoped that what is written here may be found useful in particular to those now engaged, and those who in the future are planning to engage in the great work of building communities.

The sources of information used in this work have been gathered from every corner of the nation. Many observations and conclusions are the result of the author's personal experience as secretary of a local chamber of commerce, as well as his activities as a state-wide organizer of such bodies. The inquiry breaks new ground in many respects; and this must be the writer's excuse if the treatment

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of the subject seems loose and incomplete. If the inquiry shall stimulate further research into this highly important field of civic endeavor, it shall not have been in vain.

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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

History and Growth. France was the birthplace of chambers of commerce in the modern sense of the word. Sources of information differ as to the exact date when the first chamber of commerce made its appearance, but this event occurred at Marseille probably near the end of the fourteenth century or the beginning of the fifteenth.¹ This chamber was vested with remarkable powers by virtue of a government grant which gave to it the authority to share in municipal jurisdiction and in the administration of justice in commercial and mercantile questions. It had an intermittent career, having been several times suppressed and regularly restored before it finally received a definite organization in 1650, from which time it has been continuous.

In 1664 a Council of Commerce was established by Colbert, with powers and functions considerably greater than those assigned to the Marseille chamber, but the seed had been sown, and by 1700 Dunkirk created a local chamber, followed by Lyon, Lille, Rouen, Bordeaux, Rochelle, Nantes, St. Malo, Bayonne, Toulouse and Montpellier in 1701.²

By order of the Council on August 30, 1702, a direct relation was established between the various chambers and the central Council

¹Chamber's Encyclopaedia, Vol. II, p. 747

²Commercial Organizations in France, U. S. Department of Commerce, Special Agent Series No. 98, 1915, p. 8.

of Commerce. By this order the local chambers were authorized to transmit to the Controller General of Finances memoirs setting forth their views on commercial subjects, not only within their respective districts, but also in places that had no chambers of commerce to represent them. This authority was extended so far that contemplated measures of the central government were submitted to them for opinion. This was in essence, a fore-runner of the modern method of referenda employed by the Chamber of Commerce of the United States, as will be described later in this chapter.³

The French Revolution interfered with the work of these organizations. By the decree of June 14, 1791, all corporations were abolished, and the chambers of commerce went with them.⁴ Several months later the ancient Council of Commerce was re-established, and with it returned the suppressed chambers. These were later given the right to reorganize as voluntary organizations. In the years immediately following, many new chambers of commerce were formed.

A consular edict of 1802 stated the population of towns in which chambers of commerce might be established. It also fixed the number and character of the representation of the chambers, from which one candidate from each group was selected to sit in the general Council of Commerce at Paris.

The chambers of commerce of France have always existed under the closest regulation of the national government. These regulations have been modified from time to time, but always with the end in view of making the chambers closely cooperating bodies of the central government. The history of the whole movement in France shows that

³ See page 70

⁴ U. S. Department of Commerce, Special Agent Series No. 98, 1915, p. 9.

the purposes of the chambers of commerce have been to advise the government on industrial and commercial subjects; to suggest means of increasing industry and commerce in their respective districts; to improve commercial legislation and taxation; to suggest the execution of works requisite for public service, such as the construction of harbors, deepening of rivers, and the formation of railways; and when this information was not volunteered, it was demanded by the government.

Chambers of commerce in Germany began in the old Hanseatic Confederacy. The chambers of commerce of Hamburg, Bremen and Lübeck have been evolved out of the old corporations which looked after the interests of the Hans traders. The Hamburg Chamber of Commerce as such, originated in 1665 under the name of Deputation of Commerce.⁵ In 1866 the name was changed to Chamber of Commerce, and in 1870 the formation of the German Empire necessitated a reorganization of the chamber to conform with provisions of the central government.⁶

The Chamber of Commerce of Hamburg is also the chamber of shipping, and port and docks board. The exchanges and public sale rooms of the city are under its control. It publishes official quotations as well as weekly price lists of goods and produce at the port of Hamburg. It has the right of proposing judges and of nominating experts attached to the courts. It is entitled to elect members to the "Burgerschaft" or lower house of representatives, and the chamber must be consulted by the Burgerschaft with reference to all proposals affecting trade and navigation.

⁵Encyclopaedia Britannica, Eleventh Edition, Vol. 27.

⁶U. S. Department of Commerce, Special Agent Series No. 78, 1914, p. 129.

In Bremen and Lübeck, the other Hansa cities, the chambers are likewise closely associated with the governments. In Lübeck, however, the senate must consult the chamber of commerce not only in matters of trade and navigation, but also in all proposals that are entered into on behalf of the state.

In other parts of Germany, the oldest chambers of commerce owe their origin to French legislation.⁷ The Rhenish Province was ceded by Prussia to France in 1801, and chambers of commerce were instituted at Cologne in 1803, at Crefeld and Treves in 1804, and later at several other places in that section. A second group was formed between 1820 and 1825 under the name of Merchants' Corporations at Berlin, Danzig, Königsberg and Magdeburg. The organization at Berlin, however, became a cooperating body with the Chamber of Commerce, which was founded under that title in 1901.

In most of the states of Germany, the chambers of commerce are intended to represent the interests of commerce and industry exclusively. In some places, however, as in Bavaria and Saxe-Meiningen, the chambers of commerce are at the same time chambers of trade. In all cases are the organizations created and regulated according to specific stipulations of law, usually of the state in which they operate. For this reason they are not altogether uniform in their structures and operations.

The history and growth of chambers of commerce in Switzerland parallel in many respects the development of similar bodies in France and Germany.⁸ The French system of chambers was the pattern for both the German and the Swiss organizations, although it may be

⁷U. S. Department of Commerce, op. cit., p. 97.

⁸U. S. Department of Commerce, Special Agent Series No. 101, 1915, p. 7.

said that the ultimate origin of the Swiss chambers dates back to the merchants' and artisans' guilds of the middle ages. In the second half of the seventeenth century commercial bodies were organized in Basel, Zurich and St. Gall. These were known as merchants' directorates, and before the end of the century similar bodies were found in Berne and Geneva.

The scope of these early chambers was more extensive than those found in France and Germany. They administered the postal system, regulated markets, inspected warehouses, controlled freight traffic, regulated bills of exchange, and even controlled newspapers as well as entire industrial enterprises.

With the general upheaval and disorganization of Europe at the beginning of the nineteenth century, conditions in Switzerland suffered with the rest, and the old commercial organizations went out of existence. With the return to more stable times, new organizations were formed to supplant the old ones. In 1848 new federal legislation stimulated commerce and trade, and later encouraged development of railway transportation. At the same time this very legislation robbed the existing Swiss chambers of their last vestige of special privilege. In 1870 the Swiss Commercial and Industrial Association was formed, which has now become the central association of all Swiss commercial bodies. The present system in Switzerland consists of two classes of organizations, those that are entirely independent, and those that are organized under state auspices. The former resemble the chambers of commerce of England and America, while the latter are comparable to those of France.

Turning now to Great Britain, we find the oldest British cham-

ber to be that of Jersey, founded in 1768.⁹ Other early chambers of commerce were those of Glasgow, founded in 1783, Dublin in 1785, Edinburgh in 1786, Manchester in 1794, Belfast in 1796, Birmingham in 1813, Liverpool in 1851, and Sheffield in 1857. The Chamber of Commerce of London, one of the strongest in point of members, dates only from 1881.

In the beginning the chambers of commerce were incorporated by royal charters which gave them the standing of corporate bodies. Later they were formed under patents issued by the Board of Trade, and more recently still, the new ones are in effect ordinary partnerships, the liability of each member being unlimited.¹⁰ Unlike those in continental Europe, the chambers of commerce of Great Britain operate without any restrictions, regulations or supervision from the national government. They are voluntary associations of business men and manufacturers, perfectly independent, receiving no subsidies whatever, and meeting their expenses entirely through membership fees.

In 1860 the Association of Chambers of Commerce of the United Kingdom was formed, and later incorporated in 1875. This association comprises the chambers in the United Kingdom, as well as those abroad, of which the first to be established was that in Paris in 1873. In addition to this one, there are British chambers in Genoa, Alexandria, Barcelona and Constantinople. The total number of chambers belonging to the national association were 109 in 1915, these having an aggregate individual membership estimated to be 28,000.¹¹

⁹Encyclopaedia Britannica, op. cit.

¹⁰U. S. Department of Commerce, Spec. Agent Series No. 102, p. 8.

¹¹Ibid., p. 10.

Just where and when the first chamber of commerce began in America seems to be a matter of dispute. In one instance we read that "in 1631 Kiliaen Van Rensselaer, at that time owner of all the tract of land on which Albany is built, formed a limited partnership with Samuel Godyn, Johannes de Laet, and Samuel Blommaert of the Amsterdam Chamber of the Dutch West India Company for the sole purpose of carrying on the fur trade along the Hudson River as far north as Albany. This partnership, although organized for the members' interests only, was in reality a chamber of commerce, the first chamber of commerce to promote trade and industry in America."¹²

Be that as it may, it still remains for the New York Chamber of Commerce to claim the honor of being the oldest organization of its kind, not only in America, but in the world, having been founded in New York City in 1768.¹³ While there were older chambers in Europe, as has already been shown, these were organized and maintained under government supervision and regulation, while the New York society was free and independent of action, as were its contemporaries in Great Britain.

It was on April 5, 1768, that twenty merchants of the little colonial city of New York met at Bolton and Sigel's Tavern and there founded the Chamber of Commerce. For three years previous to this time they had been united for the purpose of protesting against government action, notably that of the Stamp Act of 1765. It is apparent that these men had a clearly defined purpose in view for their proposed organization because a declaration which was submitted

¹²"Old Albany, the New City," distributed with the Annual Report of the Albany, N. Y., Chamber of Commerce for the year 1919.

¹³Bishop, "The Chamber of Commerce of the State of New York," p. 1.

and adopted contained the following:¹⁴

"Whereas, mercantile societies have been found very usefull in tradeing cities for promoting and encouraging commerce, supporting industry, adjusting disputes relative to trade and navigation, and procuring such laws and regulations as may be found necessary for the benefit of trade in general.....For which purpose and to establish such a society in the City of New York the following persons convened on the first Tuesday in, and being the 5th day of, April, 1768....."

From that date to the present, except for an interim of eleven years from 1806 to 1817, the work of the New York Chamber of Commerce has been continuous. Its history of more than one hundred and fifty years is a chronicle of a century and a half of illustrious service to its city, state, and to the nation.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, four chambers of commerce existed in this country: New York, organized 1768; Charles-ton, S. C., organized 1784; New Haven, Conn., organized 1794; and Philadelphia, organized 1801. Like the New York chamber, all of these bodies were composed of business men meeting regularly to discuss trade matters and to consider and pass resolutions on topics that vitally affected commercial affairs. These pioneer organiza-tions, while limited in their scope of activities, were the fore-runners of that vast group of chambers of commerce that have since been formed.¹⁵

During the first half of the nineteenth century the organiza-tion and development of chambers of commerce showed but little progress. The total number of four in 1801 had grown to thirty in 1858. After the development and extension of means of transportation

¹⁴Sturges, "American Chambers of Commerce," pp. 12-13.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 41.

and communication had begun, organizations of this type sprang up wherever there were growing cities, until by 1898, it was estimated that this country had 2,944 such associations under various names,¹⁶ and in 1919, the number of trade and commercial organizations had reached well beyond four thousand, sixty five percent of which were organizations with community objectives.¹⁷

The history of the movement shows more than simply an increase in numbers of organizations. Its greatest significance lies in the fact that it has developed from a small handful of chambers of commerce that had for their purpose the interests of a limited class of people engaged in trade and commerce, until today the American institution, at least, consists of thousands of organized groups that place the emphasis on the human element and its welfare in their respective communities, realizing that only by so doing are they laying the foundations for true commercial and industrial development.

It is also interesting to notice that the purposes and ideals in chamber of commerce work have changed and progressed in the same manner and along side of the purposes and ideals of democratic government. Chambers of commerce the world over, amounted to very little before the American independence. In America, just one had been born before that event, and its purpose was avowedly in the interest of liberty from its first meeting. Up to the time of the Civil War, the growth of the movement was steady but slow, but when that struggle was finished and another great step forward in popular government had been taken, the chamber of commerce movement went ahead in like manner. From that time until the end of the nineteenth

¹⁶Sturges, op. cit., p. 45.

¹⁷U. S. Department of Commerce, Miscellaneous Series No. 99.

century, chambers of commerce followed closely commercial expansion, until, like the development of so-called "big business," many evils crept into the administration and functions of commercial bodies. They resolved themselves, in many instances, into "booster clubs" and "factory grabbers," without any foundation for their actions, except that their eyes were upon dollars and bigger populations for their communities, without taking into consideration the steps necessary to take to reach those ends. The result was that they lost favor in many places, and died from the lack of clear vision as to their real purpose. In other places they became the tools for unscrupulous individuals for the purpose of furthering their own selfish ends at the expense of the community.

Then came the world war and with it another step forward as to the conception of human rights and duties in civil government. Again this was reflected in the activities of the chambers of commerce of the nation. During the days of hostilities these organizations performed tirelessly and well the duties entrusted to them as the logical organizations to care for the war work in the various communities. As often as not, local councils of defense were identical with boards of directors of the chambers of commerce. Liberty Loan drives, food conservation, Red Cross activities, and scores of other duties were cared for by them, until through the National Chamber, to be referred to later, the business men and women of the country were solidly united and stood behind the government in its prosecution of the war to a victorious conclusion.

In the nearly two years that have elapsed since the close of the war, the chamber of commerce movement has taken a new lease on life and is growing as it has never grown before. The reason for

this lies in the fact that for the first time in its history have the purposes and ideals of a chamber of commerce been clearly and correctly stated, and for the first time, also, have communities, and the individuals in them, faced their duties and obligations to their communities in any way as seriously as they are now doing. As men are beginning to realize more and more that the essential feature of self-government is that it falls upon the shoulders of every citizen, and the citizen who does not take part shirks a duty,¹⁸ so also are they beginning to realize that no man is free from a like responsibility to the community in which he lives, and this responsibility can most easily and most effectively find its useful expression through membership and service in the local chamber of commerce.

Scope. The chamber of commerce movement in the United States has become so widespread that its scope is practically commensurate with the boundaries of the nation. A comparatively few years ago there were many cities of twenty to fifty thousand population which had no chamber of commerce. Today it is unusual to find a town of five thousand population without one, and there are hundreds of these organizations serving towns and villages of just a few hundred inhabitants, and even smaller.¹⁹

Because of their being so widespread, and because of the lack of definiteness in their undertakings in the past, there has been a great variety of names by which these organizations have been designated. The most common names under which they have existed,

¹⁸Root, "The Citizen's Part in Government," Chap. 1.

¹⁹Independent, May 8, 1920.

except that of chamber of commerce, have been those of commercial club, board of trade, board of commerce, association of commerce, commercial association, business men's league, community club, boosters' club, and many others. All of these have for their purpose the same end, and in general, employ the same methods to attain this end.

During the past four years, however, more and more of these organizations have changed their names to chamber of commerce. The reason for this is evident. The title of chamber of commerce has a definite meaning, especially in foreign countries, with whom this country hopes to have closer relations through the means of foreign trade.²⁰ This title has been accepted as standard abroad, and in Europe, as well as in the Orient, the name Chamber of Commerce is one that commands respect. Correspondence written on letter heads bearing some other title does not command the attention that it would if the title on the letter head were Chamber of Commerce. This is important when the nature of the work of a chamber of commerce is considered, requiring as it does, a vast amount of written intercourse.

Another reason which has led to the change in name is that where so many titles are used there is bound to be confusion as to the exact function of an organization bearing some other title than Chamber of Commerce. While there are a few chambers of commerce that are not civic organizations in the accepted sense, the number of such is very small. More than ninety-five percent of the chambers of commerce in the United States are commercial organizations with

²⁰ "Building and Maintaining a Local Chamber of Commerce," Chamber of Commerce of the U. S., Organization Service, p. 37.

community objectives.²¹ A questionnaire sent out by the organization service of the Chamber of Commerce of the United States in 1915, showed that only 40 per cent of the organizations answering called themselves chambers of commerce. Four years later a survey showed 63 per cent answering to that title.²² This indicates a marked tendency toward the adoption of a uniform title that will be understood in foreign countries as well as at home. Chamber of commerce organization has not confined itself to local community aspects alone. A study of the field of its activities reveals that it has reached out into county, regional, state, national and even international affairs.

County organizations are effected in different ways. One method used is to merge rural and urban interests and efforts, where conditions permit such merging. Under this plan the chamber of commerce is usually headed up in the county seat and is designated as a county chamber. Its organization is identical with that of the standard chamber of commerce, but its membership is drawn from every section of the county. It has for its purposes primarily a county-wide program of work, although such a program of work does not differ materially from that of a strictly city or community organization, aside from the fact that it covers a wider territory. The objectives of such a typical county chamber of commerce are as follows:²³

"The objects of this county Chamber of Commerce shall be to advance the agricultural, horticultural, viticultural, commercial, industrial, civic and community interests of the city and county, and all other industries, whether in the nature of farming, manufacturing, or otherwise; to acquire, preserve and distribute industrial, commercial and civic

²¹U. S. Department of Commerce, loc. cit.

²²Chamber of Commerce of U. S., loc. cit.

²³Fresno, Calif., Fresno County Chamber of Commerce, Accomplishments, 1919, p. 23.

statistics and information of value, and to have a part as representing the county in the consideration and decision of matters of legislation and matters of county, state and national interest."

Another method of county organization is used in some places. In this case, the organization is effected not by means of individual memberships, but by representatives from the various local chambers of commerce existing in all the towns and cities within the county. Each chamber, or similar organization in the county, may become a member of the county organization upon application to the governing board, which is made up of two members from each affiliated chamber. Dues are assessed upon a per capita basis for each chamber, but all the representatives have equal voting power, irrespective of the size of the local body from which they may come. Monthly meetings are held, the plan being to rotate the sessions among the various communities in the county.

The objects of this kind of county chamber of commerce have been stated to be "to link together the commercial clubs and similar organizations in the county for the study and discussion of all questions relating to the general good and advancement of the business interests of the county, and to increase the influence and efficiency of individual commercial clubs, each in its own field. To promote every special line of activity which tends toward the better development and settlement of its agricultural lands, the building up of its general prosperity, and to advertise and give better publicity throughout the United States to all of the county's advantages and attractions. To cooperate with the county commissioners and to provide for them a medium through which to expend the advertising fund appropriated by them under the laws of the state."²⁴

²⁴Colorado, Weld County Commercial Club, Constitution and By-Laws, p. 4.

The regional form of organization is similar to the county form last described above, except that it applies to a region which may include several counties, rather than any one county alone. Such an organization is made possible only where the region involved has peculiar kindred interests throughout, either by reason of natural location or because of other physical features which cause it to have common problems affecting all localities within the region.

As an example of what an association of this kind finds to undertake, one organization of this type has set before itself six great factors for development within its region. They are agriculture, education, marketing, transportation, industry, and the people. With these are included wholesome advertising propaganda and field service work, made available to all the counties in the group.²⁵

When we consider the chamber of commerce movement in its state-wide aspect, we find four types of organizations more or less related. One of these is what is commonly known as the State Association of Commercial Secretaries. This type is in no sense a chamber of commerce, although its membership is made up of those most actively engaged in chamber of commerce work, namely the secretaries. It is more in the nature of a professional organization where the individuals engaged in a common task band themselves together for mutual benefit, purely personal, and of value to the state as a whole only indirectly as the efficiency of the secretaries increases, and thus affects their local communities. One such association has given as its reason for existence the following:²⁶

"The object of this association shall be to increase the efficiency of the secretaries and thereby to promote

²⁵ Terre Haute, Ind., Wabash Valley Empire bulletin, pp. 1-2.

²⁶ National Association of Commercial Organization Secretaries, report of first Annual Meeting, 1915, p. 149.

local strength and effective cooperation in hastening the development of the South's vast resources."

Another type of organization that is found more or less scattered throughout the country is that of the State Federation of Commercial Clubs and Chambers of Commerce. This form is for the most part a resolution body, holding a limited number of stated meetings each year and relying upon the strength of its affiliated members to accomplish results. The main purpose of its sessions is to serve as educators of the delegates and of corresponding benefit to the state.

Only a few of this type of organization have been successful. They are decidedly in the minority among state associations in the United States today,²⁷ and the reason is obvious. A federation usually has a structural plan too loosely devised to escape the danger of disintegration. If the federation fees are nominal, an insufficient budget to carry out worth while projects is the result. If the dues are heavy enough to give the federation a working revenue, the drain upon local chambers is prohibitive. Furthermore, the danger of jealousies and sectional difficulties are apt to creep in for the reason that the financial, and hence the voting strength, is usually confined to the more populous industrial sections, while other portions of the state have little, if any, representation. Therefore it would seem that the federation type of state body has so many objectionable features that it defeats the very purpose for which the organization was effected.²⁸

A third type of state organization is that of the State Development Federation, sometimes called the State Association. Such an association is usually composed of individual memberships centered

²⁸National Association of Commercial Organization Secretaries,

²⁷loc. cit., p. 154.

U. S. Department of Commerce, loc. cit.

around a definite objective, as for instance a publicity movement to feature industrial or agricultural facilities; a concerted effort to secure for the state a certain proportion of the activities, institutions and business of the federal government; or the agitation for civic and social reforms.²⁹

The work of the development federation is very definite and concise and a high percentage of accomplishment of important matters is the result. Its chief handicap is that it, too, like the federation of commercial clubs, is apt to become sectional and to work in too specialized a field to cover the whole state. Jealousies have often arisen in smaller communities that have insisted that the officers of the development federation have simply worked for the large cities in the state and the only place the smaller communities have found is that of a big share in paying the bills. This feeling is often due to the fact that membership based primarily on a selfish motive, may be withdrawn upon being satisfied or dissatisfied, as the case may be, with some particular achievement.³⁰

In order that an organization of this kind, state-wide in scope, may function properly with any degree of permanency, it is necessary that it embrace the cooperation of all sections of the state to work for the development of the general welfare of the whole commonwealth. With such an end in view has come into being the State Chamber of Commerce. While this form of organization predominates and far exceeds in number the other types already described,³¹ it is as yet very largely an experiment, but an experiment that is proving successful, particularly in the eastern states, notably New York, New

²⁹Colorado Development Federation, Constitution.

³⁰National Association of Commercial Organization Secretaries, loc. cit., p. 155.

³¹U. S. Department of Commerce, loc. cit.

Jersey, and Pennsylvania. Where it has been tried in the states farther west it has met with great favor and promises to be the final solution of the state commercial organization problem.

The purpose of a state chamber of commerce is to "furnish a central organization for the whole state in order to coordinate all the civic, social, commercial, industrial, educational and agricultural activities of the state, and to advance its prosperity generally."³² Its chief function, therefore, is to keep the public mind correctly informed in a state-wide attitude.

A state chamber pursues its functions through resources secured from memberships held by public spirited firms, individuals and organizations--persons who are interested and believe in the united energies of such a state organization. When carefully planned and rated, it is usually possible to secure enough such memberships to adequately finance the affairs of the chamber if it has a definite program of work of state-wide interest to present.

In the main, the organization of the state chamber of commerce is the same as the standard local chamber. It operates through active officers, directors, committees and bureaus, the latter forming the real machinery of the chamber. To cite a case in point, one state chamber operates through five bureaus: agricultural, legislative, housing, field service, and research. Each of these bureaus is conducted by a man of technical training and practical experience in the particular field represented by the bureau. Briefly, the agricultural bureau gives technical assistance to the broad agricultural questions relating to the assembling and distributing of farm products; proper marketing facilities; transportation adjustments;

³² Wyoming, State Chamber of Commerce, By-Laws.

good roads; rural schools, and the like. The legislative bureau is in continual touch with the legislative and administrative departments of the state. When the legislature is in session, the legislative bureau chief is at the state capitol and informs the chamber members of the effect of certain bills and of their legislative status. The housing bureau has available approved methods of financing and organizing housing projects, together with practical plans for homes for those communities desiring this service. The field service bureau helps to strengthen the effectiveness of local organizations and maintains close relations with the chambers of commerce in the cities and towns of the state. The research bureau is designed to give trained investigation service upon public questions arising in connection with legislative matters, civic, commercial and other problems affecting the general life of the nation.³³

It is the practice of state chambers of commerce to take a referendum mail vote of its members on questions of public policy, proposed legislation, or any other matter where such action seems desirable. Such methods are not only democratic, but their results give the conclusive opinions of the representative membership of the chamber.

Where state chambers of commerce are properly organized and where they receive adequate support from the citizens they are designed to serve, they constitute one of the greatest factors, not only in community building, but in state building as well.

Passing from the state to the national phase of the chamber of commerce movement, we find its influence to be of tremendous importance. Its activities in this country date back to the time of the

³³ Pennsylvania, State Chamber of Commerce, What it does; how it operates, 1920.

organization of the Chamber of Commerce of the United States in 1912. In the spring of that year a group of business men met with the President of the United States and the Secretary of Commerce and Labor and laid the foundation for this organization. Today the national chamber has a representation of more than twelve hundred trade and commercial bodies with an underlying membership of 670,000 individuals.³⁴

Embraced in this membership are organizations and individuals in every state in the union, and in Alaska, Hawaii, Porto Rico, and the Philippine Islands. In addition to these are also the American chambers of commerce in England, France, Argentine, Cuba, Italy, Turkey, Brazil, Belgium, China, Mexico, and Spain. In fact, the sun never sets on the activities and influence of this great body around the world. Any movement that has succeeded in eight years to have behind it a united purpose of 670,000 people, business men and women who direct and control the principal enterprises of the country, is filled with immense possibilities and significance for the progress and establishment of American business ideals.

Policies of the national chamber are determined in two ways: by a referendum vote of the member organizations, and in annual or special meetings of delegates from the several bodies. The former method of obtaining business opinion throughout the country, is growing in popularity, because included in the referendum vote are the organizations in the small cities and towns as well as in the great metropolis. When the returns come in from such a vote, therefore, the national chamber has the opinion of all the elements in the world of business, rather than that of a single group or section.

³⁴ Chamber of Commerce of the United States, Historical Sketch, p. 2.

In this connection it is interesting to note that the Chamber of Commerce of the United States has to date called for a referendum vote on thirty different propositions as follow:³⁵ 1. National Budget; 2. Permanent Tariff Commission; 3. Anti-trust Laws; 4. Owen-Glass Currency bill; 5. Development of the Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce; 6. Legislative Reference and Bill Drafting Bureau; 7. Proposal to create an Interstate Trade Commission; 8. Trust Legislation; 9. Upbuilding of the Merchant Marine; 10. Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce and the Consular Service; 11. Economic Results of the War and American Business; 12. Seaman's Act; 13. Maintenance of Resale Prices; 14. Federal Aid for Vocational Education; 15. National Defense; 16. Railroad Situation; 17. Combination as related to Natural Resources; 18. Permit the President to Veto Separate Items of Appropriation Bills; 19. Prevention of Strikes and Lock-outs; 20. Financing War; 21. Railroad Regulation; 22. Control of Prices During War; 23. A Proposal to Discriminate against Germany in Trade after the War if Necessary for Self-Defense; 24. Water Power Development; 25. Financing War; 26. Trust Legislation; 27. Principles of Industrial Relations; 28. Remedial Railroad Legislation; 29. Government Owned Merchant Ships; 30. Establishment of a Department of Public Works.

Perhaps the National Chamber's greatest service to the country was in directing war activities. Recognizing the tremendous task of mobilizing all the resources of the nation for the successful prosecution of the war, and the special duty of business men to aid in every possible way, the Chamber of Commerce of the United States placed at the disposal of the government all the facilities of its

³⁵ Nation's Business, Dec. 1919, p. 72.

organization for any use to which they could be employed. War service committees convening at Washington, a war convention at Atlantic City, and active service in Liberty Loan campaigns, are highlights in the Chamber's war program.

After the war had ended and reconstruction problems began to take the place of war activities, the National Chamber brought about a conference at Atlantic City of representative business men of Belgium, France, Great Britain, Italy and the United States for the purpose of making plans for the reopening of the regular channels of commerce. This meeting has been regarded as one of the most important gatherings of business men since hostilities ceased on the battle fronts of Europe.³⁶

Membership in the Chamber of Commerce of the United States is limited to business, commercial, trade, or civic organizations not organized for private purpose. In addition, persons, firms and corporations holding membership in any organization admitted to the National Chamber are eligible for election as associate and individual members. Such memberships carry with them all the privileges of the body except that of voting, unless as duly accredited delegates of organization members.

The board of directors of the organization is selected by districts to represent all sections of the country. Twenty-five members constitute the board, which selects the regular set of executive officers. An executive committee of eleven members of the board, together with the president, acts for the board in interims between meetings. There is also a national council composed of one representative from each organization member through which close

³⁶ Chamber of Commerce of the United States, Historical Sketch, p. 4.

cooperation is effected between the central body and the member chambers scattered throughout the country. A series of special and standing committees complete the organization as it is formed to handle the vast amount of work that comes up for its consideration.

So important and so useful has the chamber of commerce movement been found to be that it is also being recognized on an international basis. There are in the United States a large number of semi-foreign chambers of commerce. Among these may be mentioned the following:³⁷ The American Chamber of Commerce of the Levant; the American-Roumanian Chamber of Commerce; the Argentine-American Chamber of Commerce; the Chile-American Chamber of Commerce; the Chinese Chamber of Commerce of San Francisco; the French Chamber of Commerce of New York; the Holland-American Chamber of Commerce; the Italian Chamber of Commerce with headquarters in Chicago, New York and San Francisco; the Japanese Associations of Arizona and Los Angeles; the Japanese Chamber of Commerce of San Francisco; the Norwegian-American Chamber of Commerce; the Swedish Chamber of Commerce of the United States of America; the Portuguese Chamber of Commerce and Industry of New York; the Pan-American Chamber of Commerce; the American Asiatic Association; and the United North American Japanese Association.

All of the foregoing chambers are more or less self-centered and not absolute international chambers of commerce. But even this final step in the great movement will be attained by the organization of an International Chamber of Commerce in Paris during the summer of 1920. This international chamber was projected at the International Trade Conference held in Atlantic City in the fall of 1919.³⁸ The

³⁷ U. S. Department of Commerce, loc. cit.

³⁸ Summary Eighth Annual Meeting, Chamber of Commerce of the United States, 1920, p. 2.

purpose of this latest and most far-reaching chamber is "to promote international commerce, to facilitate the commercial intercourse of nations, to secure harmony of action on all international questions involving commerce and industry, and to promote peace, progress and cordial relations between the countries and their citizens by the cooperation of business men and their associations devoted to the development of commerce and industry."³⁹

It is plain that a movement as comprehensive in its scope as is that of the chamber of commerce, is the one big medium that may be used more and more in community building as applied to local, national, and international interests. It is one vast interlocking body, almost universal in its aspect, with unlimited potentialities that may be utilized to the greatest advantage of society as a whole.

Purposes and Ideals. It is only within very recent years that the real purposes and functions of the local chamber of commerce in its relation to the community as a whole, have been recognized. There is no question but what conditions brought about by this country's participation in the world war, had much to do in stimulating, if not actually bringing about cooperation in community thinking and action. The war activities carried on by local communities, as pointed out in a previous section, resulted in arousing community consciousness to a realization that there is practically no limit to what people may do when properly organized, in the way of enterprises that benefit the whole group. When the armistice was signed, therefore, and hostilities had ceased on the battle fields of Europe, communities all over this nation suddenly found themselves possessed of great potentialities hitherto undreamed of, and turned themselves

³⁹Community Leadership, Feb. 26, 1920, p. 3.

to projects of "reconstruction", not knowing just what that term signified. It was the desire for continued action that manifested itself, and since "the government" no longer demanded their undivided efforts, people began to look toward their local problems once more, but with a bigger vision.

Commercial clubs and chambers of commerce that had been allowed to die during the stress of war, were suddenly revived and reorganized. In communities where such bodies had been neglected for long years before, new civic associations were formed. In fact, it is interesting to note that in one state alone the number of such organizations increased from a bare dozen that persisted during the years of war, to more than sixty during the first ten months of 1919.⁴⁰

With such a condition existing in the country, these organizations began to cast about for some definite statement of their purposes and ideals that should be far-reaching and all-inclusive, so far as the activities of the chambers of commerce were concerned. True, there had been such statements, but they had been narrow and confined and not broad enough in their scope to compass the whole scheme of community building with which the movement now found itself confronted. Men turned to the chamber of commerce to tackle these reconstruction problems, not because it was the best organization imaginable, but because it was an available organization ready for immediate action.⁴¹

Men who had given most of their lives to the study and activities of chambers of commerce in all their phases, saw at once that a new

⁴⁰ Chamber of Commerce studies by the Author, Colorado, 1918-1919.

⁴¹ Independent, loc. cit., p. 224.

era had begun for organizations of this character, and asked themselves, what is the real function of a chamber of commerce. A survey of the field was convincing that commercial and civic organizations were beginning to study municipal problems, and were eager to exert wise leadership in cooperation with public officials in solving such problems as the simplification of local government, civil service, pensions, taxation, sources of city revenue, accounting methods, central purchasing, public safety, fire prevention, public health, hospitals and dispensaries, the relation of public to private charity, public works, waste collection and disposal, building inspection, management of public buildings, markets, parks, school organization and equipment, museums and libraries, recreation, municipal employment agencies, and many other community affairs that a dozen years ago were considered "politics", and outside the province of a chamber of commerce. It was concluded, therefore, that "to teach the public to think and to translate sane thought into effective action, are the two primary functions of the modern chamber of commerce."⁴²

This conception of the duties of a chamber of commerce gave the organization an entirely new aspect; it was a conception born of the realization that commerce, after all, exists solely because there are human wants to be satisfied, and that the word "business" is the name we give to the organized machinery of satisfying them.⁴³ The chamber of commerce found itself to be a leader, requiring a definite program of work designed to touch all phases of community building--a program resting upon a realization of the social and civic, as well as the economic implications of business.⁴⁴

⁴²Community Leadership, April 22, 1920, p. 1.

⁴³Wilson, Lucius-E., "Building Cities for Tomorrow," p. 7.

⁴⁴Community Leadership, Feb. 12, 1920, p. 1.

"A city must think progress, must be guided by its optimists, must value constructive men more than destructive ones, must have a clear idea of the demands and possibilities of future city and national growth, and must have the courage to live up to its ideals. This is the foundation of a modern chamber of commerce."⁴⁵

Today, therefore, we find the field of work of the chamber of commerce as broad as the community itself. More than sixty per cent of the resources of the chambers of commerce of the country are devoted to civic affairs: to those things which relate to the development of the citizen power of the nation.⁴⁶ Not only that, but the modern chamber of commerce has enlarged its conception of the community to embrace not only the streets and pavements of the town, but the fields and farms of the surrounding territory. The business men of the towns are going to the business men of the farms, not to teach them how to farm, but to take counsel with them concerning their common problems. In such fashion, in broad outline, is the modern chamber of commerce functioning today--a body of men and women acting in their capacity as citizens, not as the representatives of any special group or class, but devoted to the material and cultural development and advancement of the whole community.

In a word, the purposes and ideals of the modern chamber of commerce seek to build municipal morals. It seeks to bring team-work out of chaos and confusion. It sees that it is good business to focus the business intelligence and energy of a city upon the whole range of the city's life: its economic problems, its educational problems, its social problems, its rural problems. It builds an intelligent

⁴⁵ Wilson, Lucius E., "Community Leadership," p. 50.

⁴⁶ Chamber of Commerce of the United States, Organization Service, loc. cit., p. 9.

program for the total life of a community, realizing that "foresight is the beginning and the end of the work of a chamber of commerce."⁴⁷

⁴⁷Community Leadership, Feb. 12, 1920, p. 1.

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CHAPTER II

COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS

Business. One of the great services that most chambers of commerce render to their communities is the promotion and protection of the business interests of the merchants, bankers, and other business men that come within the sphere of their influence. This is particularly true with respect to those engaged in the distributive process, such as wholesale and retail trade. As a general proposition, what is good for the community is good for all the members that compose it, and while the average chamber of commerce must have as its end the welfare of the whole community for which it functions, at the same time it also undertakes many projects that are of special moment to definite groups of its membership. Of such, then, is its relation to business, used here in the sense as that term applies particularly to trade in merchandise and services, leaving the subjects of industry and transportation for subsequent consideration.

According to the census figures of the United States for 1910, nearly 9.5% of all persons over ten years of age engaged in gainful occupations in this country were engaged in some activity especially related to trade, exclusive of manufacturing, commerce or transportation.¹ And what is again quite as significant is the fact that nearly 90% of these were in some way connected with merchandizing establishments. In spite of its importance to the community and to the country as a whole, the buying and selling of goods has been given the least scientific study, comparatively speaking, of all productive activi-

¹Thirteenth Census of the United States, 1910, Vol. IV, p. 53.

ties, with the result that stores and places of business loom large in the mortality tables of commercial failures.

Here, then, a fertile field has presented itself to every local chamber of commerce to perform services that are vital and far-reaching in the life of the community. It has taken chambers of commerce, and business men generally, a long time to see that the intelligent understanding of business principles and processes is one of the main foundation stones that holds up the structure of financial success. To this end, therefore, chambers of commerce have been directing their efforts toward Merchants' Short Courses, Business Institutes, and special night schools adapted particularly to merchants and their employees. In some places the State University, through its extension division, cooperates closely with the chambers of commerce in this work.² Where short courses are held, they may be in the nature of a series of popular lectures on business topics, held during a whole week, or simply on three or four consecutive evenings, and to which employers and employees attend. Wherever courses of this kind have once been tried, they have thereafter found regular places on the programs of work of the chamber as indispensable instruments of service to its merchant constituents.

More and more business men are seeing the need of salesmanship courses as means of training in service for themselves and their employees. Sometimes such courses are supplied by the public school system of the community, and sometimes by the stores themselves, but very often they are not. Here again the chamber of commerce has stepped into the breach and supplied the need. In one community the local chamber established such a salesmanship night school, offering

²University of Colorado.

a course covering a period of ten weeks. A competent instructor was employed to handle the work and an enrollment of 359 salespeople from the business houses of the city was the result. Of these, 159 completed the course and took a final examination at the end.³ Better salesmanship, more and better advertising, better accounts and better management are all problems of education and training, as well as experience. When the means of securing such training are not available in the community, progressive chambers of commerce have made it a part of their business to supply them.

It has been said that "competition is the life of trade," which is true as far as it applies to wholesome rivalry for higher standards in business, but competition has often been given another interpretation whereby one business man, by his actions, virtually said to the other, "I can cut my commercial throat closer to the jugular vein and still live, than you can." Where such conditions exist, competition is not the life of trade, but on the contrary, is a trade killer, and when the business establishments of a community fail to work together as competitors, paradoxical as that statement may seem, one is almost certain to find such a community a follower and not a leader in the onward march to better things commercially.

Because this is true, chambers of commerce have found that another great service which they can render to the business interests of the community is to cause them to pull together and in the same direction. In some places this is brought about by means of special sale days, dollar days, and cooperative advertising. Cooperative advertising used as a medium of publicity in conjunction with co-operative sale days resulted in extending the radius of the trade

³ Jersey City, N. J., Chamber of Commerce; System, Vol. 34, p. 861.

territory of one community from five or six miles, to forty or fifty miles.⁴ In this instance an advertising expert was employed by the merchants through their division of the local chamber, to write special advertisements describing all the retail establishments of the community as though each were simply one department of a great store. Care was used that no overlapping took place in the different advertisements. Such advertisements were run not only in local newspapers, but in the large dailies of a city twenty miles away. The particular "news" which the advertisements carried had to do with special monthly sale days, each held on some week day other than Saturday. In this sale each business house featured specials, and an agreement was perfected whereby no merchant would sell a competitor's special sale day offering for less than the regular price. The cost of advertising was borne by each advertiser in proportion to the space used by his particular place of business.

When this working together became known generally, people drove long distances to shop in this town. Sales were increased more than fifty per cent on the special days, and the regular Saturday business showed a substantial increase as well, and a little town of 5,000 people only twenty miles from a city of 50,000, and less than six hours from the metropolis of the state having branches of two mail order houses national in scope, has become nationally famous because its merchants have learned that it pays to work together. Similar plans are used in many other places in the country.⁵

Through the efforts of the local chambers of commerce, merchants have been persuaded to cooperate in the matter of uniform closing

⁴Neosho, Mo. Judicious Advertising, Sept. 1919, p. 29.

⁵Huntington, Ind.- Beaver Falls, Pa. East Liverpool, Ohio.

hours,⁶ style shows and attractive spring openings,⁷ and credit rating bureaus.⁸

In years past a great deal of effort has been spent by chambers of commerce in stimulating buy-at-home campaigns in their attempt to successfully meet mail order house competition, especially so far as this business affected the surrounding agricultural districts. Much time, breath and money went for naught by preaching "loyalty to the home town", "who pays the taxes?" and similar slogans. But methods of this sort seemed only to cause the mail order business to grow even more rapidly, with the result that the small town merchant called his farmer neighbor disloyal and a crook, and the farmer regarded the merchant as a swindler and a thief. Things seemed to go from bad to worse in this respect, throughout all the agricultural sections of the country, until someone set about to scientifically find out the reason why. One such attempt was made by the chamber of commerce of Elyria, Ohio.⁹ By means of questionnaires and personal investigations it was found that the inability of the local merchants to compete with mail order houses was due to poor business methods: poor salesmanship, bad store arrangement, slow deliveries, indifference, lack of courtesy, incomplete stocks of merchandise, errors, and in a very few cases, high prices. All of these causes had been so close to the merchants themselves that they had failed to see them, and when they were brought to their attention, it was not without something of a shock. But they were wise men and soon discovered that when the right personal relations exist between customers and mer-

⁶ New Brunswick, N. J.

⁷ Hamilton, Ohio.

⁸ Canon City, Colo.

⁹ System, Vol. 31, p. 156.

chant, business will very largely take care of itself.

In other places this personal relationship between the merchant and the farmer has been strengthened by trade trips into the country, the improvement of roads leading into the city, and the establishment in the town of rest rooms and other conveniences for the farmers and their families. In one community the merchants closed their places of business for one day, put on overalls and went into the country to help harvest a potato crop to save it from the frost.¹⁰ In another place a similar closing takes place periodically for the purpose of keeping the country roads in the best shape possible.¹¹

There are many other activities entered into by chambers of commerce for the particular purpose of building up the trade of their respective communities. In many of the large cities annual trade extension trips are taken by the wholesale and jobbing interests. When these are undertaken, special trains carrying the representatives of the different firms are run, often hundreds of miles, into the trade territory served by the city, and scores of smaller communities are visited for the purpose of stimulating trade.¹² Another instance of direct cooperation with the merchants on a large scale was the establishment of a wholesale produce market in a community to supply fresh farm products daily to retail dealers. Such a market was established by a municipal ordinance upon the recommendation of the local chamber of commerce. It is supervised by a board of five citizens, two from the chamber committee, two at large, and the chamber's assistant secretary. This market has been served by as many as 100 producers at one time, and has tended to do away with

¹⁰ Cadillac, Mich. System, loc. cit.

¹¹ Kiester, Minn. System, loc. cit. This community has a population of 258, and a chamber of commerce membership of 160.

¹² Denver, Colo. Jobbers' Bureau, Denver Civic and Commercial Asso.

hucksters and peddlers, and to divert the business to the retail merchants instead.¹³

The foregoing illustrations are sufficient to emphasize how closely the chambers of commerce of the country are related to the business interests of their communities. They are the moving spirits that are continually directing their constituents to new and better methods.

Industry. Chambers of commerce have always been regarded by the general public as organizations that were instituted for the primary purpose of "factory grabbing", and the chamber that was the most successful was the one that could boast in each successive annual report of the greatest number of smoke-stacks secured for its community during the year. This notion has grown out of conditions as they were in the past when commercial organizations had as a single goal for their activities the locating of industrial plants in their respective communities, and to attain this end, all sorts of methods were used; the important thing was to get factories and thereby increase the local payroll. As a consequence very often huge cash bonuses were offered to attract industries. Then there was the plan of giving other special inducements, such as free sites, tax exemptions, moving costs, free rents, low water rates, and trackage advantages. All of these schemes were in the nature of commercial bribery which often resulted in vicious rivalry between neighboring towns, as well as the organization of industrial concerns in places that had neither the necessary raw materials, labor or market to maintain them. There are sorry examples in large numbers that have learned by experience that "buying a factory is not necessarily get-

¹³ Waterbury, Conn. American City, Oct. 1919, p. 383.

ting a factory." A bonus seeking plant is too often headed in the direction away from permanent success, and a chamber of commerce that picks its factories through the use of artificial inducements is courting trouble.¹⁴

For a number of years one of the common methods of financial aid given to new industries by chambers of commerce, was what came to be known as the "Williamsport plan." This plan was essentially a subscription of credit by responsible local business men. By this method, the local banks would agree to furnish money to such industries as might desire to negotiate loans on the endorsement of three attorneys-in-fact, representing the subscribers to the fund. Contracts ran for a period of five years. If at maturity the applicant failed to meet the obligation, the subscribers to the fund paid the amount due by him, each subscriber being liable for a pro rata only of the indebtedness.¹⁵

As this plan actually worked out, credit was only extended to industries that found some difficulty in negotiating a loan from a bank. The result was that the credit of any concern so helped was materially injured, and it was more difficult for it to secure accommodations from local banks without the same sort of endorsements. Believing that ultimately it was detrimental rather than helpful, the plan was abandoned by the Williamsport, Pennsylvania, Board of Trade in 1914, where it had had its origin fourteen years before.¹⁶ Quoting from an editorial in the "Williamsport Sun" in this connection, the fallacy of bonus giving in any form to industries is pointed out:¹⁷

¹⁴Wilson, Lucius E., "Building Cities for Tomorrow," p. 5.

¹⁵U. S. Department of Commerce, Special Agent Ser. No. 60, 1912, p. 28.

¹⁶Report of Second Annual Meeting, National Association of Commercial Organization Secretaries, Sept. 1916, p. 105.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 109.

"The best thought in the industrial world today has set its face strongly against the bonus idea for the location of industries. Both in theory and practice it has failed time and again, though there are instances to be cited of successes. The benefit conferred by large accessions to a community are real and they should be recognized to the full. But when they are estimated for a long period in advance, reduced to dollars and cents and coldly bargained for, it releases the community from the finer hospitalities that are of real worth in the years that should make it and its industries one unanimous force for the common good."

It must not be supposed, however, that chambers of commerce are no longer seeking to stimulate the industrial growth of their communities. The contrary is quite the case. Industrial development upon a sound and scientific basis has supplanted the old methods of auctioneering and bargaining for factories. Every progressive chamber now has its industrial or manufacturing division or bureau; or, if the size of the community does not warrant so elaborate an organization, a committee on trade and industry serves the same purpose. Since the industrial growth of a community requires a readjustment of every aspect of a city's life, the chamber of commerce bases its interest and activity in industrial development upon facts determined by a comprehensive survey of the district in which it operates. This survey takes into account the supply of labor, raw materials, transportation, markets, rents and taxes, housing, educational facilities, and general living conditions. An exhaustive study of this character was recently completed in a western city¹⁸ to form a basis for a campaign to secure manufacturing establishments equipped to supply goods that should figure principally in an expanding foreign trade. With facts like these at hand, capital available for investment in industry finds its way without difficulty into proper channels, and where communities have something substantial to offer in

¹⁸Seattle, Wash. American City, Aug. 1919, p. 171.

the way of factors that vitally affect the permanency of industry, they stand a better chance of securing desirable concerns than those whose mere offer of money would attract.

Oftentimes the matter of securing adequate housing facilities for new and small factories is a serious handicap to the industrial growth of a community. Buildings suitable for factories are usually a scarce article as average cities go, and to meet this situation, through the efforts of the local chambers of commerce, some cities have built what is known as "factory incubators," or loft buildings. These buildings are erected for the purpose of housing several small factories all under the same roof. In one community such a plant holds twenty-one different enterprises which turn out products to the value of \$2,000,000 annually.¹⁹ Upon the recommendation of the local chamber, far-seeing men were induced to form a company to construct such a building. By paying rent on a sliding scale based upon the amount of space occupied, the factories it holds have been able to pay a handsome return upon the investment to the owners of the building. This method has been the most satisfactory of any ever adopted by the commercial bodies of the country, and is growing in favor year by year.

One of the most serious conditions that has faced this nation in recent years, industrially speaking, is the shortage of houses--living quarters for the people that live in our towns and cities. The beginning of the present housing shortage in the United States dates back to 1907, and since that time less and less cubic feet of construction has been available per person. The low water mark was reached in November, 1918, when construction was but four per cent of

¹⁹ Toledo, Ohio. System, Vol. 34, 1918, p. 376.

normal. Authorities agree that during the gradual slowing down of construction from 1907 to 1919, the United States fell behind at least one year in its building output, and the United States Department of Labor estimated that at the close of the war this country was in need of a million houses.³⁰

The immediate cause of this situation can no doubt be laid at the door of the restriction that was placed upon the building industry by the government during the war. The gradual slowing down in building operations before the war was due to the increasing cost of construction. Since the signing of the armistice on November 11, 1918, and the removal of all building restrictions two days later, building has not shown the increase that was hoped for. Most of the construction development that has taken place in this country, so far as houses for living quarters are concerned, is after all the work of the private builder, the man with a family desiring a home, and the man with moderate means who seeks a small personal gain. All of these have found little inducement to build houses since the close of the war. Since that eventful date, building materials have advanced in cost to 136 per cent above pre-war levels, while general commodities have advanced 129 per cent above pre-war levels.³¹ In considering the price of building materials, such other items as cost of freight, fuel, and labor enter in, in addition to the prime cost of raw materials.

All of this has a direct bearing upon the industrial development of a community. It is of little avail for a city to seek more factories and increased payrolls when it has no houses in which the

³⁰Miller, F. T., The Housing Situation in England and the United States, p. 19.

³¹Ibid., p. 23.

workers and their families may live who make the factories and the payrolls possible. Adequate housing facilities with all of the sanitary, educational, recreational and public conveniences that are attached thereto, constitute problems which the modern chamber of commerce has had to face in its program of industrial expansion.

But the chamber of commerce has been equal to the task. It has met the situation through the formation of financing or improvement companies, and through the encouragement of home building by individuals. A compilation of facts secured in a recent investigation of 136 chambers of commerce representing every state in the union goes to show that in every case the chamber of commerce is the local organization that has been able to cope with this abnormal condition, and in a measure, secure some degree of relief.²² The most common method employed has been the organization of a home building corporation composed of a small group of members of the chamber, and capitalized in sufficient amount to undertake the building of apartment houses, bungalows, or the laying out of entire new city subdivisions,²³ as the case might be. These corporations have taken various forms, some of them with the idea of being temporary and to automatically go out of existence as the houses it had built were finally purchased. Others have permanent organizations, and still others are in the nature of building and loan associations. The important thing that is desired to emphasize here is that here again the chamber of commerce has stepped into the breach and satisfied a real need in community building.

Many chambers make the mistake of directing all their industrial efforts toward securing new industries and forgetting that it is

²²National Property Owner, May 1920, p. 31 ff.
²³Lebanon, Pa. System, Vol. 35, 1919, p. 365.

equally as important to support those already in operation in the community. When this happens only half of the problem has been solved. A study of the field, however, is convincing that progressive chambers everywhere are realizing that they have a particular duty to see that the streets running to their present factories are properly paved, that the plants have the best traffic facilities that are possible to secure for them, that parks and playgrounds are conveniently located and equipped, and that everything possible and practical is done for the welfare of the working people who are the life blood of every industry and every community.

To this end chambers of commerce are directing their energies in various ways. In one city the labor turnover of the factories was reduced to 130 per cent as compared with 400 to 500 per cent in other places in the same state. This result was effected by means of the organization of a labor bureau in the chamber which keeps a complete record of every worker in the district, this record being available at all times to the employers, and the result has tended to discourage "floaters" from seeking jobs in that particular city.²⁴ In another place a Bureau of Industrial Counseling is maintained for the purpose of giving information and affording a free consultation service on all phases of employment of women in industry.²⁵ In other places where the general labor question is acute, special boards of arbitration and committees of investigation are established for the purpose of averting strikes and settling other industrial differences.²⁶

²⁴Connersville, Ind. American City, Feb. 1920, p. 181.

²⁵Cincinnati, Ohio. American City, Aug. 1919, p. 171.

²⁶The Common Weal Committee of the Chamber of Commerce of Oakland, California, is composed of ten members, five employers and five union men. It provides an open forum for employers and employees alike. A notable instance of its usefulness was its settlement of

A few years ago the following criticism by an uninformed writer appeared in a paper of considerable circulation:²⁷

"The consistent toryism and venality of Chambers of Commerce is a thing to amaze and dishearten the observer. They can be counted upon to oppose every progressive measure from child labor reform and workmen's compensation to changes in the tax laws designed to relieve enterprise from the extortion of slackers. Invariably are their signals set against progress in any form, and apparently it is just the blind resistance of unenlightened selfishness.

"It is a shame of American business men that they are willing to sit back and see their supposedly representative chambers of commerce controlled by the most reactionary and anti-social elements in the business community. Apparently they either fear the power of "the big fellows" or they are too pre-occupied with their personal affairs to give any attention to the things that are said and done in their names."

There are no doubt many others who have been laboring under the same delusion with respect to the activities of the modern chamber of commerce, particularly in its relation to industrial matters. As a contrast to the unfounded criticism referred to above, it is refreshing to read the following excerpts from the recommendations of the Industrial Committee of the Merchants' Association of New York City, offered to the Board of Directors as suggestions that should be a guide to that body in its relation to the immediate industrial situation:²⁸

1. The recognition by both employers and employes that the determination to achieve national prosperity rather than to enforce maximum selfish returns should be the controlling motive in industry.

The community as such has a right to insist that industry be carried on in the interest of all citizens

a street car strike in less than twenty-four hours' time, in the face of rioting.

A similar committee is the Committee on Industrial Relations of the Chamber of Commerce of Grand Rapids, Mich. It is not a board of arbitration but a committee on investigation and publicity. It is composed of four employers, three union laborers, one non-union laborer, and three non-employers. Its chairman is a laborer and a member of the Board of Directors of the Chamber. See

²⁷ American City, Nov. 1919, p. 477, and Dec. 1919, p. 577.

²⁸ The Public, Mar. 16, 1918, pp. 328-329.

American City, Jan. 1920, p. 65.

rather than for the sole benefit of those engaged directly in it. The permanent welfare of all citizens depends on national prosperity, which is impossible unless there is maximum production at minimum per unit cost without impairment either of proper living standards of employes or the ability of the employers to earn a reasonable return on their investment.....

2. The establishment of a recognized and permanent method of conference between the employer and his employes.

The mere willingness of an employer to meet employes who have grievances is not sufficient. There should be a definite arrangement--satisfactory to both employer and employes--whereby employes can collectively take up disputes or matters of common interests with employers.

3. The limitation of the economic law of supply and demand as a basis of labor policy by the utilization of a more human doctrine.

Your committee recommends the immediate recognition of the following principles which will themselves modify the application of the law of supply and demand to a large degree, and are essential to the development of the human doctrine:

(a) All wage-earners, skilled and unskilled, in return for a fair day's work, have a right to a living wage sufficient to insure the workers and their families the opportunity to live in health and comfort in accord with the concepts and standards of American life.

(b) Continuity of employment at normal wages should be maintained up to a point where the permanent prosperity and stability of the business--rather than immediate profits--would be endangered thereby.

Commerce and Transportation. This phase of the work of a chamber of commerce is one of the most specialized of any of its functions. When a transportation department or traffic bureau forms a part of the organization, it usually requires the direction of a man of special training and long experience. Where the chamber is too small to warrant the cost of such a department, the work is generally handled by committees acting through the office of the secretary.

The relation of the chamber of commerce to the problems of commerce and transportation of a community extends in three general directions: maritime and waterway traffic, railroads and highways.

Under the first of these, foreign trade is being given more careful attention and study than it has ever received before. Communities everywhere that are in any way interested in ocean going commerce are keenly alive to the fact that American shipping on the high seas has grown to larger proportions than it has ever enjoyed in the history of the country. The stimulus that was given to shipping in America during the world war has resulted in an immense fleet of American merchant vessels equipped and engaged in the commerce of the world. In some of the primary ports the local chambers of commerce are keeping in the closest touch with the government in its merchant marine policy. For example, one committee in its annual report stated that it favored the sale of wooden vessels and of steel vessels under 6,000 tons dead weight, to the highest bidder; that it favored the absorption by the government of the difference between the war cost and the present value as a war loss; that it favored government aid in the maintenance of a privately-owned and operated merchant marine; and that it cooperated with the Navigation Laws Revision Committee of the United States Shipping Board for the purpose of making recommendations for the revision of the navigation laws of the United States in order that our merchant marine may be placed on a competitive basis with the merchant marine of other maritime nations.³⁹

It is not necessary to dwell at length upon all of the different matters that come to the attention of chambers of commerce in connection with foreign trade; the mention of several of them will be sufficient to point out how indispensable American chambers have become to those of their members who deal in world commerce. A most

³⁹Boston Chamber of Commerce, Current Affairs, May 17, 1920, p. 8.

advanced step in the field of foreign trade promotion was taken by one chamber some years ago in the establishment of a branch of its own organization at Buenos Aires. A special manager versed in South American conditions was put in charge of this office for no other purpose than to furnish the members of the chamber first hand expert advice on trade conditions as they exist in the Latin Americas.³⁰

Another chamber, among other things, maintains a reference library consisting of several thousand books and pamphlets covering all sections of the world and treating all phases of foreign commerce; it publishes weekly a list of foreign trade opportunities and market reports; it is continually securing new service from foreign steamship lines; and it is famous for its hospitality to foreign visitors to America.³¹ Still another has concerned itself with harbor improvements, shipbuilding, and imports and exports.³² Sea coast towns, however, are not alone in their foreign trade activities. One of the most recent events in this direction is the proposed "Great Lakes to the Sea" project which has enlisted the cooperation of chambers of commerce in fifteen states between the Rocky Mountains and the Alleghanies.³³

It is in connection with the railway transportation problems of the community that the traffic bureau has served its greatest usefulness. Its activities involve rate adjustments, classification of freight, rules and regulations pertaining to the receipt, transportation, delivery and storage of freight, damage claims, car movements, embargoes, and service rendered to passengers.³⁴ In all of

³⁰ Chicago Association of Commerce, U. S. Dept. of Commerce, Special Agent Series No. 60, 1912, p. 9.

³¹ San Francisco Chamber of Commerce Activities, Jan. 9, 1919.

³² Toronto Board of Trade, Year Book 1918, p. 9.

³³ "Great Lakes to the Sea." Detroit Board of Commerce, 1920, p. 3.

³⁴ Akron, Ohio, Chamber of Commerce, Year Book, 1919-20, pp. 67-68.

these matters does the local chamber render direct service to its community. Its aim and purpose may be described by quoting the following from a report of such a typical bureau:³⁵

"It is the constant aim of the traffic bureau to accustom members of the chamber to invoke its aid whenever in need of information, advice or assistance in any matters relating to transportation. The service offered to the members is without charge.....The bureau is equipped to give individual members a service in transportation affairs which they cannot obtain from any other source at any cost. Where differences arise between members and carriers, the bureau renders the member assistance and advice and indicates the best method of procedure in all cases in which traffic problems are involved and in which a knowledge of traffic matters is required."

When new railroad facilities have been needed locally, they have been secured by the local chamber of commerce. Very often among such improvements have been new passenger stations and union depots.

But transportation services to the community do not stop there. In recent years with increasing costs of operation, many municipal street railways have found themselves in serious circumstances. Sometimes it has been the matter of increased rates, sometimes poor service, and oftentimes both. These conditions have been met by the local chambers of commerce stepping in and by their influence continue the municipal transportation services, either by special rate plans such as service-at-cost,³⁶ or by thorough investigations of the situation with exhaustive reports to the community.³⁷ In other places whole systems have been taken over by communities to save them from being junked, and through the efforts of the local chamber have been made to operate on paying bases.³⁸

35 San Francisco Chamber of Commerce, loc. cit.

36 Achievements of successful Chambers of Commerce, American City Bureau, 1920, p. 16, Camden, N. J.

37 Ibid., p. 34, Kansas City, Mo.

38 Fort Collins, Colo., Commercial Club, Annual Report, 1919.

The tremendous growth of the automotive industry in America has turned the attention of the whole country to the subject of roads and highways in a manner that has no parallel since the early days of the nineteenth century when government aid was largely responsible for the construction of wagon roads and turnpikes that opened up great sections of the country to settlers to which they otherwise could not have come. Could the man who wrote "You may go from Philadelphia to Pittsburgh in the stage, 310 miles, in five and a half days, and be lodged every night on the route,"³⁹ have lived today, he might have advertised, "Pittsburgh is now but twelve hours' motoring from Philadelphia, and should you desire to make the trip in easy stages over parts of two days, delightful free camping grounds with running water, electric lights and sanitary conveniences, or comfortable hotels may be found everywhere enroute." In both cases he would be referring to roads and highway traffic.

Before the advent of the automobile in such great numbers, the work that was done by county authorities under the laws of the various states, was often considered as sufficient to maintain passable highways.⁴⁰ Dirt roads with small grades or fills, "dumps," as they were commonly called by the rural road overseer, together with small wooden bridges and culverts over creeks and draws, was about the extent of the road improvements of the time. But automobiles and trucks have made other requirements in road building and maintenance necessary, until today the big problem is to secure enough mileage of hard surfaced roads, usually concrete pavements, to adequately meet the demands of highway transportation. And just at this point

³⁹ Bogart, E. L., *Economic History of the United States*, p. 188.

⁴⁰ Thompson, C. M., *History of the United States*, p. 252.

have the chambers of commerce of the country taken hold in a manner that has spelled success for many communities and, on occasion, whole states, where road projects would otherwise have failed to materialize.

It is not at all uncommon to find in the annual report of a chamber of commerce a statement like the following: ".....pledged its support to the county board of supervisors, placing on the Chamber of Commerce the responsibility for carrying on a publicity campaign for a bond issue named by the county supervisors at \$4,800,000. Through close cooperation with the board, this issue was carried at a special election with a majority in excess of any previous road bond issue of record."⁴¹ Here was a bond issue secured for the roads in one county half a million in excess of the total cost of the Cumberland Road from Washington to Vandalia a hundred years before,⁴² and directly through the efforts of the local chamber of commerce. And again, "The Chamber of Commerce again emerged victorious from a hard fought campaign for a bond issue when the county voted to bond itself to the amount of \$5,000,000 for the purpose of building an improved system of modern concrete highways. The State on the same day voted a bond issue of \$25,000,000 for better highways in the state at large. This is the second bond campaign brought to a successful conclusion by this organization in the last six months."⁴³

While chambers of commerce are playing so large a part in securing these internal improvements for their various communities and states in an altruistic spirit, they at the same time realize

⁴¹ Fresno County, Calif., Chamber of Commerce, Annual Report, 1919, p. 4.

⁴² Bogart, E. L., op. cit.

⁴³ Birmingham, Ala., Chamber of Commerce; Community Lead., Mar. 11, '20.

that the communities from which radiate good roads to the outlying trade territories are the ones whose business interests are going to prosper. Right merchandising and good roads have sounded the death knell to a large amount of mail-order competition that was once extant in many purely agricultural sections. The farmer who was once four or five hours away from his market because the distance happened to be fifteen miles, now hauls his grain and hogs to town in less than an hour by means of trucks, and while it took him two hours with the driving team and buggy, it is now only a matter of thirty minutes with "the car." In the great agricultural sections of Kansas, Missouri, Colorado, Nebraska and the Dakotas, many towns have extended their trade territories to a distance of fifty to seventy-five miles because they have been instrumental in securing good roads leading out into these areas. A farmer fifty miles out on a hard surfaced road may easily come to town and do his trading Saturday night after supper, take in the movies with his family, and be home again before midnight. Thus the community is built up even outside of the corporate limits of the municipality.

As good roads have continued to develop, or perhaps contemporaneously with their development, has come the "ship-by-truck" movement throughout the land. As a result, particularly in the important mountain sections of the western states, many places that are not reached by railroads, are now on regular truck lines giving freight, express, mail and passenger service, with as regular schedules as the towns located on the railroads themselves. Not only that, but merchants have found that the establishment of an interurban bus and truck line has been a great help in increasing the retail sales of the community. Where such a fleet of trucks operates it is possible

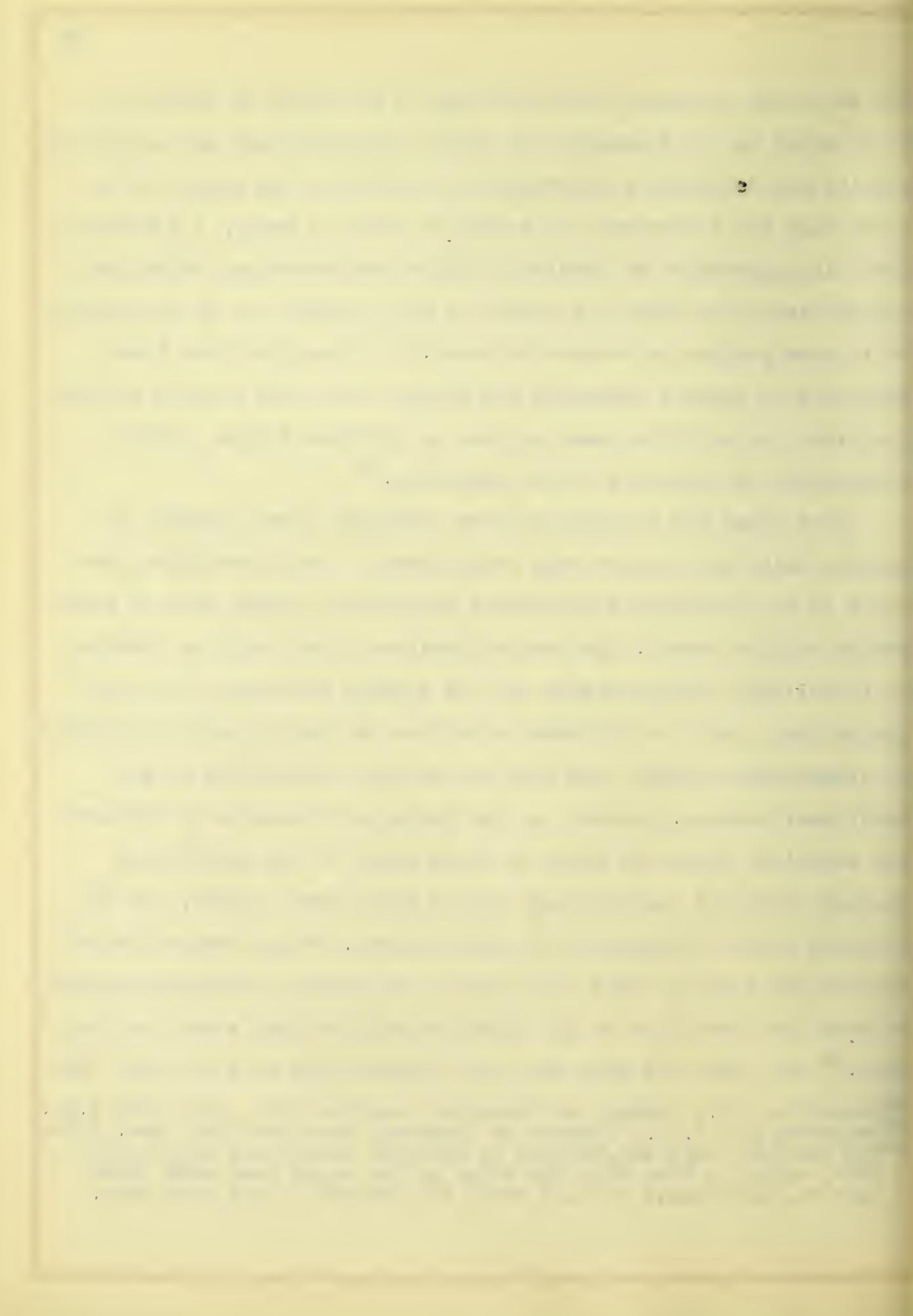
for the rural customer living from just a few miles to thirty or forty miles out to telephone her order to the merchant one day and to receive her merchandise delivered at her door on the next, and in order that the trucks may not return to the city empty, the farmers have the opportunity of sending in their produce--eggs, butter and vegetables--to be taken "in trade" by the merchant, or to be delivered to some produce or commission house.⁴⁴ It has also been found desirable to operate passenger bus lines in the more densely settled districts, to serve the same purpose as suburban trains, thereby stimulating the business of the community.⁴⁵

Good roads and automobiles have developed a new industry in America which has assumed huge proportions in many localities, and which is of considerable importance everywhere, namely that of automobile tourist travel. The tourist business is as truly an industry as is railroad transportation and the grocery business; it is as specialized, but in a different direction in that it must be fostered by communities, states, and even the nation, rather than by any individual concern. However, as the wants and pleasures of tourists are supplied, those who cater to their wants in the communities through which the tourists pass and to which they journey, are the ones who benefit financially in the business. It has been estimated that in one state in 1919 the value of the tourist business amounted to more than the value of any other industry in that state for that year.⁴⁶ This does not mean that the tourists paid more for what they

⁴⁴ Maysville, Ky., Chamber of Commerce, American City, July 1918, p. 63.

⁴⁵ Poughkeepsie, N. Y., Chamber of Commerce, American City, Dec. 1919.

⁴⁶ The tourists left \$20,000,000 in Colorado during the season of 1919, which is more than the value of the sugar beet crop which gave to the farmers of that state \$19,000,000 in the same year.



received than ever before, but it means that good roads, adequate advertising, and courteous treatment of visitors, together with the increasing number of automobiles have combined to bring tourists in ever increasing numbers into this particular state. A clipping from a newspaper will illustrate the magnitude of modern tourist traffic:⁴⁷

"To give an idea of the tourist traffic that is passing out toward the western section of the country, a Colorado paper states that 2,286 automobiles were checked as entering Estes Park, Colorado, on Sunday and Monday a week ago. One of the road overseers who had charge of the roads reported that 456 cars passed a given point on one road in one hour. Six of these cars were Fords and carried 71 people. On the previous Saturday evening people were entering Estes Park at the rate of three a minute, and in the canons every available nook that might be used as a camping place was occupied."

What is true in this instance is true generally throughout the country, and the chambers of commerce have had more to do in stimulating tourist travel than any other agency. They are the ones who, besides assisting in developing first class highways, direct the tourists on these roads by means of proper signs; who establish free public camping grounds, distribute road maps and road information, who establish and cooperate with auto clubs, who maintain tourists' bureaus of information regarding housing accommodations and points of interest, who supply publicity material that attracts the tourists, and who, in general, look after this growing industry for their respective communities. The chamber who neglects this phase of its work is sure to lose for the reason that routes are becoming more and more numerous year by year, and the community who does not invite the tourist is not going to find him driving its way when the tent, camp-roll and fishing tackle have been strapped on the running boards, and the family machine is headed out of the front gate.

⁴⁷ Dakota Republican, Vermillion, S. Dak., July 15, 1920.

Finally, as the most recent development in transportation has come the airplane. Here again chambers of commerce have come to the front in securing proper aviation fields, hangars and other equipment necessary to place their communities on the list of landing ports and control stations in this enterprise of air traffic.⁴⁸ On water, on land and in the air--wherever transportation affects the welfare of the community--there is to be found the guiding influence of the local chamber of commerce.

Agriculture and Rural Development. As was pointed out in an earlier section of this chapter, the old fashioned chamber of commerce with its cash bonuses and free factory sites, is rapidly passing away, and instead of indulging in a great deal of misdirected and misspent effort in trying to secure something for the community for which the community was probably never fitted, towns and cities, big and little, are beginning to look to the country, out into the fields of growing corn and wheat and hay. "Here lies the opportunity--for the great city, strange as it may seem, is out in the country, hidden in the fertility of the soil. A successful hay campaign will bring factories to the town. Hay means beef and pork, which beckon the packing house and storage plant. More corn means cereal mills, glucose factories, starch factories. Flour mills locate in wheat producing sections. Creameries follow the dairy cow, and the truck patch calls for the canning factory."⁴⁹

In the past a great gap has existed between the farmer and the city man, a gap caused by the suspicion the one held of the other, and a suspicion, like all others of its kind, born of ignorance. But

⁴⁸Albany, N. Y., Chamber of Commerce, Annual Report, 1919, p. 14.
⁴⁹Report First Annual Meeting, National Association of Commercial Organization Secretaries, Sept. 1915, p. 194.

the day has arrived when the business man and the farmer and the manufacturer must all work together, a condition which cannot obtain as long as they are kept apart by fictitious notions regarding the integrity and honest purposes of one another. In order to bring about such cooperation and such spirit of mutual helpfulness, chambers of commerce everywhere are directing their best efforts toward agricultural development.

It is plain to those who give the subject unbiased study that there exists an interdependence and a community of interest between the city man and his country brother that may not be ignored if the best interests of each are to be subserved. In the first place, no one will deny that the farmer is the foundation of our entire economic structure, and that unless business men and those who live in the cities consider this fact seriously, many of the economic and industrial problems of our nation stand in a fair way of remaining unsolved. Merchants and manufacturers are beginning to realize, however, that every crop and every product raised on the farms have a direct bearing upon the volumes of business of their establishments, and that the contents of every pay envelope that the merchant and the manufacturer must fill may be traced back to the ultimate source in the soil. Likewise the farmer is beginning to see that he will not long be able to conduct his business upon a profitable basis unless he increases his annual production, and then disposes of this product by means of proper methods of salesmanship and marketing. "Plan together, work together, serve together," is a slogan that one community employs in its efforts to stimulate this desirable cooperation between city and country.⁵⁰

⁵⁰Greater Terre Haute Club, Terre Haute, Ind., Bulletin, 1920.

Recognizing, therefore, that the city cannot prosper unless the country prospers, and that the country cannot prosper unless the city prospers, the modern chamber of commerce has set itself to the task of formulating a program of definite objects to be attained in this direction. Such a typical program may include:

1. General agricultural development by scientific methods of agriculture as demonstrated and provided by County Farm Bureau Organizations.
2. Increased production of farm products by means of seed selection, soil fertility and improved farming equipment.
3. Adequate marketing facilities for crops and produce, involving good roads, public markets and market information.
4. Diversified farming such as dairying, stock raising and the production of fruit.
5. Education through better rural schools, consolidation of school districts, community Home Economics departments, farmers' institutes and young people's clubs.
6. The social life of rural communities, with its health and recreational problems.

These items, in general, may be said to cover the field of the activities of a local chamber of commerce as it sees its duty to its constituents residing in the agricultural sections contiguous to and forming the trade territory of the immediate town or city itself.

It is a very common practice for chambers of commerce to co-operate closely with county farm bureaus and their county agents or agriculturalists, as they are sometimes called. Very often the local chamber of commerce is instrumental in securing such a bureau with its added benefits to the farmer, and in a great many cases the office of the bureau is housed with that of the chamber of commerce itself, a very desirable condition lending itself the more readily to cooperation in this large field of work. It may safely be said

that farm bureaus the country over have met with their greatest success where they have been associated in the closest manner with the local chambers of commerce.

To show to what extent a chamber of commerce will go to develop the farm bureau idea, it may be of interest to point out one such chamber in a southern state⁵¹ which has raised a fund of \$90,000 as a working capital for its Bureau of Farm Development for a period of three years. Its purpose is to cooperate with neighboring agricultural colleges and to introduce the study of agricultural development into the rural schools of the districts it serves. An agricultural expert gives his whole time to the work, which, besides making personal calls upon the farmers that solicit his advice, involves the organization and supervision of boys' clubs in the prize growing of corn, cotton, peanuts, alfalfa, pigs, calves and colts, and girls' clubs in canning, poultry, sewing, cooking and flowers. In addition, a weekly sheet called "Market Information and Exchange List" is published and distributed to the members of the bureau. New marketing methods, cooperative shipping and other useful information is continually keeping the farmers served by this bureau abreast of the times concerning the things in which they are interested.

To stimulate directly the production of farm crops, chambers of commerce are undertaking a great variety of things. For example, the providing of seed for the planting of crops is often a serious matter in many localities. In a recent case successive limitations in production due to drought, found the farmers in a wheat and corn raising district without ready cash with which to buy seed for spring planting, and feed until pastures should begin to grow. The local chamber

⁵¹Memphis, Tenn., Chamber of Commerce. American City, Sept. 1919, p. 373.

of commerce took the situation in hand and by means of cooperative credit on the part of the farmers needing the money, loans amounting to several thousands of dollars were secured, and the situation was met and the spring planting regularly cared for.⁵² In another instance the establishment of a "seed clearing house" resulted in a uniform distribution of a local seed supply and avoided the necessity of importing seed, thus not only saving time but money to the farmers as well.⁵³

Many chambers of commerce in their work among the farmers lay great stress upon the necessity of keeping fertility in the soil. Not only are educational campaigns carried on in this connection, but when necessary a local chamber of commerce may actually buy fertilizer for rural distribution. In a case in point the local chamber secured a trainload of fertilizer which it sold at cost to 300 farmers in its trade territory. This amount covered 1,200 acres of wheat land, which, the next summer, returned an increase in production of six to twelve bushels per acre, or from twenty-five to fifty per cent more than in former years.⁵⁴

In arid sections irrigation projects are fostered; during labor shortage free employment bureaus are operated; tractor demonstrations are held; agricultural fairs and farm products exhibits are maintained, and wherever there is an opportunity to increase the production on the farms in the area served, the local chamber of commerce may be found there, rendering its service.

Along with increased production of farm products there must be the attendant feature of proper marketing. In fact, increased pro-

⁵² Greeley, Colorado, Chamber of Commerce, 1920.

⁵³ Chester, Pa., Chamber of Commerce. System, Feb. 1918, p.272.

⁵⁴ Hannibal, Mo., Chamber of Commerce. System, Jan. 1918, p. 70.

duction is useless to the farmer unless his products can be marketed at a profit, and to this end the chamber of commerce of today is studying marketing problems and establishing marketing facilities that are filling a long-felt want in the great agricultural sections of the country.

A matter of primary importance in marketing is the ability of the farmer to get his produce to the shipping point, which involves good roads. The instances are lamentably too many where great crops of potatoes and fruit have been allowed to rot in the fields and orchards because of impassable roads--roads perhaps not more than a few miles long, the improvement of which would probably cost much less than the value of the crop which could not be brought to the consumer because of the neglected condition of the highways in the district in question. Accordingly, chambers of commerce have declared war on bad roads, and they must go to be replaced by adequate systems of highways that permit of transportation throughout every season of the year.

Another consideration of foremost importance is that of standardization of the product, which involves grading for size in some, and quality and variety in all crops. It has been found that uniformity in grade and variety attract buyers, and by standardization the demand for the products is stimulated, which works to the advantage of the farmer. At the same time there must be adequate warehouse and storage facilities to take care of the products until marketing conditions are right. In all of these we find chambers of commerce paving the way through their agricultural committees and farm bureaus for definite service to those who grow the crops.

In this connection it is interesting to notice the service that is being given the farmers by the local chambers in the way of daily market reports. One such service consists in the receiving of daily telegraphic reports from five important primary markets, these reports being in turn summarized and furnished to those interested by means of bulletins, telephone calls, and daily publication in the local papers.⁵⁵ In this way the farmers are kept in touch with the markets of the country on the same day as these markets close, and in this way they may be able to determine the right time in which to market their stock, grain or produce, as the case may be. In other places central bureaus of information are maintained through which the man who wants to buy can get in touch with the man who wants to sell.

The establishment of public markets for the particular benefit of truck and fruit raisers have been undertaken by many chambers of commerce with a marked degree of success. To such a market the farmers bring their products to be sold to the city consumers. The elements necessary to bring success to such a market are (1) a good location easily accessible to the public; (2) cooperation of the women's organizations of the community in order that the market may be properly advertised to the kitchen and table purchasing agents as a good place to buy; (3) separation of hucksters and peddlers from the farmers. By the observance of these rules, the public market has proved to be invaluable to producer and consumer alike.⁵⁶

Chambers of commerce are also concerning themselves in the work of diversified farming, believing that it is not wise for the farmer

⁵⁵ Greeley, Colorado, Chamber of Commerce.

⁵⁶ Jersey City, N. J., Chamber of Commerce. American City, Mar. 1920, p. 305.

to "put all his eggs in one basket," and in the event of ^aone-crop failure, suffer a total loss for the year. Among such activities one of the most important seems to be that of introducing the dairy industry into the farming sections, especially of the West. A notable accomplishment of this kind, which is typical of many, took place recently in a Kansas community through the efforts of the local chamber of commerce.⁵⁷ A special train with a party of 162 persons of the local community was run into the northern dairy states for the purpose of educating the farmers of the local district as to the value of the dairy industry. The result was that great interest was aroused and a local Holstein-Friesian Association was organized with a capitalization large enough to insure its permanency, and the dairy business in this section has been established on a firm and profit-paying foundation. Throughout Nebraska, Wyoming and Colorado similar undertakings, varying simply in details, have been successfully projected with the result that the farmers are receiving a never-failing income and the communities are becoming industrial centers with condenseries, creameries and cheese factories as added sources of income to the towns' payrolls.

One of the greatest problems today is that of the rural school. It ostensibly trains half of the boys and girls of the nation, and someone has said that "it only half trains them only half the time." In some places we find chambers of commerce attacking this problem scientifically and with an earnestness that is hopeful of a wide-spread influence for good throughout all agricultural sections of the country. Some of these tasks one organization has set before itself are school consolidation, teachers' salaries, the long school term, teacherages, introduction of courses of study of special

⁵⁷ Fort Scott, Kan., Chamber of Commerce, Annual Report, 1919.

interest to rural children, such as agriculture and home economics.⁵⁸

On perhaps a smaller scale we find the establishment of educational advantages of this kind by other chambers. For example one community has a Home Economics department with an experienced demonstrator and a modern kitchen directly in connection with its chamber of commerce. Here classes are held for the rural women, both young and old, as well as for the people of the town itself. In addition, the demonstrator is constantly ready to respond to the call of anyone interested in her work in the district served.⁵⁹ Then there are farmers' institutes and popular lecture courses and farmers' weeks maintained by local chambers for the special benefit of those interested in agriculture. By these and other methods, the chamber of commerce as constituted today is seeking to do its part in rural education.

There remains one other phase of rural life which the busy chamber of commerce with its multifarious interests has not overlooked, namely that of the social side. Here enters in the problems of friendly intercourse between country and city neighbors, stimulated by picnics, fairs, country visitation trips, farmers' field days, city rest rooms for special use of farmers' wives and families, all of which are for the purpose of creating and maintaining a greater degree of personal friendship between the city dwellers and the people on the farm. In still another way have certain chambers reached out into the social conditions of rural districts, and by means of lectures and other educational propaganda have gone into the whole subject of rural health and sanitation, pointing out the

⁵⁸ Greater Terre Haute Club, loc. cit.

⁵⁹ Rocky Mount, N. C., Chamber of Commerce, American City, Oct. 1918, p. 317.

causes of high death rates in many rural communities, and methods of prevention by means of proper sanitary precautions.

Perhaps there is no better way in which to sum up the study of the relation of the modern chamber of commerce to agriculture and rural development than to quote from a report issued by a western organization bearing upon this subject:⁶⁰

"High ideals are necessary for the complete success of the movement; that it is not altogether a matter of producing 100 bushels of corn where 50 grew before, or piling up a bank account to the greater altitude, half as much as that all men shall realize their kinship and the solidarity of mankind; that the farm life shall become more attractive; that the burden of the housewife shall be less; that the education of the boy and the girl shall be more practical; that better roads shall be built; and that public improvements shall be encouraged. Financial gains will necessarily come as a result of the working out of such problems."

Municipal Government and Civic Improvement. The relation of the modern chamber of commerce to municipal government and civic improvement is one of the most important subjects of the present inquiry because it is at this point that the chamber approaches the power house from which community progress in its final analysis must come. Where, then, is the point of contact, and what is the relation of the local chamber of commerce to the city government, whatever its character may be?

As one secretary has pointed out, it is true that many communities have developed and grown rich without paying any attention to the civic affairs that have guided them; at the same time, a community without civic development remains at a standstill, and commerce will eventually blight, if not decay. "Commerce may make civic development possible in a pronounced degree, but civics in return makes

⁶⁰ Clinton, Ia., Commercial Club, in U. S. Department of Commerce, Special Agent Series No. 79, 1914, p. 53.

commerce human instead of mechanical, thus making permanent commercial progress possible."⁶¹

It is clear, however, that the chamber of commerce may not supersede or usurp the powers and functions of established municipal government. "The line of demarcation between civic activities and political activities, drawn by commercial bodies, must lie between ante-election campaigning and post-election cooperation, between self-partisanship and unselfish non-partisanship, between party preferment and community progress and welfare."⁶² It is not to be construed, however, that the chamber of commerce does not take cognizance of what is going on until it has happened. Chambers of commerce in large numbers have fittingly made it known in their respective communities what kind of government the municipality would insist upon at the next election, even before a ticket was in the field, and by so doing, those aspiring to office have been able to take due notice and to govern themselves accordingly. The following quotation from President Garfield of Williams College, written more in the nature of a prophecy, is really a statement of fact today:⁶³

"If it should come about that the only place for free and effective deliberation is among the voters prior to election day, then, plainly, bodies like the Chamber of Commerce will become normal centers for consideration of public questions, and their influence will become increasingly important."

That there are those who feel even more strongly upon this subject, is witnessed by the following statement:⁶⁴

⁶¹ Towne, O. B., Secretary, Chamber of Commerce, Kalamazoo, Mich. Report Second Annual Meeting of National Association of Commercial Organization Secretaries, Sept. 1916, p. 37.

⁶² Ibid., p. 32.

⁶³ Sturges, Kenneth, op. cit., p. 173.

⁶⁴ Report of the Third Annual Meeting of National Association of Commercial Organization Secretaries, Sept. 1917, p. 54.

"Instead of keeping out of politics, the time has come for organizations like this to get into politics, and to do it in no uncertain manner, or else they had better disband. I do not mean politics in the ordinary sense, of course, but I do feel that organizations like ours ought to take a much more decided stand in the matter of securing good city government, and that they ought to hew to the line, instead of getting cold feet just the minute that there is danger of individual merchants losing a nickel's worth of trade. The great curse of commercial organization work in the past has been that after all, too many members, officers and directors, have looked upon the selfish side instead of the broad view of community interest."

With these references as examples of the trend of thought and action in this important relationship of the chamber to local government, it is probably safe to say that so far as the chambers of commerce themselves see their position, they recognize that their relative working status is that of the voluntary propagandist body as complementary to the legally constituted executive body. "The commercial organization is the investigating body, the recommending body, the educative body."⁶⁵

A study of municipal government reform during the last ten or fifteen years will show the active part that chambers of commerce have taken in this movement throughout the country. Wherever there have been changes in the charters of municipalities we usually find that the local chambers have figured very largely in the campaigns. It is not within the province of the present work to discuss the merits or demerits of any particular form of municipal government, but local chambers of commerce have been responsible in large measure in securing the adoption of the commission form of government in many cities. Where such individual action has taken place, it has usually been accompanied by a careful study by a committee on municipal research appointed by the chamber. The purpose of such a com-

⁶⁵Towne, O. B., loc. cit., p. 36.

mittee would be to gather together and present to the citizens of the community all such facts as had direct bearing upon the local situation. It would act in a purely informative and educative capacity in order that the voters might be able to cast their ballots in an intelligent manner. One of the noted instances of such a campaign is that undertaken by the Association of Commerce of St. Paul, Minn., in 1913.

In more recent years the city manager form of city government has become popular in many places in the United States. Here again we find the chamber of commerce very closely associated with the work of securing this form of city charter. In 1912 the chambers of commerce of Sumter, S. C., and Dayton, Ohio, conducted the campaigns which were responsible for the establishment of these pioneer city manager types of municipal government in the United States.⁶⁶ Since that time it has become quite general that where such a charter has been framed, the local chamber has taken the initiative in securing it for the city. A rather unique situation exists in one community where, by an agreement between the city councilmen and the board of directors of the chamber of commerce, the secretary of the chamber is also the borough manager, sharing his time equally between the two positions.⁶⁷

As has already been suggested, not only must the support and confidence of the people be won, but there must also be close co-operation between the chamber of commerce and the local governing body. A striking example of such cooperation is that of Hamilton, Ohio, during the disastrous flood of March, 1913. Here was a situation where a city suddenly found itself without a municipal govern-

⁶⁶ Sturges, Kenneth, *op. cit.*, Chap. VIII.

⁶⁷ Philipsburg, Pa., *American City*, Oct. 1918, p. 317.

ment because the mayor had apparently become a victim of the raging waters in their sudden inundation of the whole Great Miami valley. While the flood was still but a few hours old, the chamber of commerce, through its president and a handful of members marooned in a down-town business block, brought into existence a provisional government that proved itself capable of handling such a critical situation. The chamber's vice president became chief of the commissary department which fed the destitute citizens; the treasurer of the chamber's industrial fund became keeper of the morgue and chief of hospitals, a mournful and thankless job, but extremely important; the chamber's treasurer was made treasurer of the relief fund; several members of the organization served as extra police and guards, many of them for days and nights in succession with little or no rest, and the whole chamber of commerce, instead of cooperating with the city government, was forced to take its place. "The habit of cooperation that had been developed by the chamber of commerce was an invaluable asset of the whole community in a great emergency."⁶⁸

Other instances of teamwork between chambers and city councils might be cited in which joint sessions and special committees play a large part. In Chicago the Association of Commerce has even gone so far as to conduct a series of excursions for the purpose of giving the aldermen and other city officials a real look at the city and its industries.⁶⁹ All of which are indicative of the important place that the modern chamber of commerce occupies, directly and indirectly, in the governmental affairs of American municipalities.

⁶⁸ Redding, Leo L., How the Chamber of Commerce of Hamilton, Ohio, met a Great Emergency; World's Work, Sept. 1913, pp. 598-9.

⁶⁹ U. S. Department of Commerce, Special Agent Series No. 60, 1912, p. 37.

Turning now to the subject of civic improvement, we find that there is scarcely a chamber of commerce in the country, large or small, that does not stress this phase of its work. In fact, to many, in their annual programs of work, definite civic improvement holds the place of first importance. Cities are realizing more and more that the community which makes itself the most beautiful, the cleanest, and the most pleasing is the one that will grow industrially. For that reason are there so many chambers of commerce so actively engaged in city planning, because city planning, when correctly understood, simply means the making of a city a better place in which to live and work.

"Of all organizations in a city--civic organizations, churches, women's clubs, and social organizations--the commercial organization is the one above all others which is peculiarly suited to undertake city planning work. This is because city planning is directly connected with industry and commerce. Complete industrial and commercial efficiency is impossible in an unplanned city. Furthermore, the chamber of commerce is usually the only organization which can raise the amount of money necessary to start city planning work; and, more important still, the say-so of the successful men who compose the business organization and who are often the leading taxpayers of the community carries vastly more weight with the governing bodies of the city than do the supposedly fanciful dreams of many of the other organizations in the city. If city planning in America is going to proceed along permanently satisfactory lines, it will be because the chambers of commerce have promoted it and backed it."⁷⁰

The foregoing quotation is clearly an expression of what is

⁷⁰Ford, George B., *Chambers of Commerce and City Planning*; Civic Press, 1916.

going on in the cities of America today. The great work of city planning is everywhere fostered by the local chambers. In a middle western city the chamber of commerce appointed a special committee on city planning with instructions to proceed to formulate definite plans for civic improvement. This committee was later officially made the City Planning Commission with power to act, and as a result of its careful study, the final report of the object and scope of the proposed new plan for the city included the following:⁷¹

Rearrangements of streets.

Improving the steam, interurban and street railway systems.

Zoning of all building.

Uniform distribution of park units.

Arrangement of public building sites so that as new structures are needed they may be so placed and built as to form a dignified and beautiful group conveniently located and provided with attractive approaches and settings.

Grade crossing elimination.

Public comfort stations.

Tree planting.

Ornamentation of streets.

Central warehouse district and freight terminal.

River front improvements.

Civic center.

One of the most recent, and at the same time one of the most remarkable undertakings of this character is that which is planned by Middletown, Ohio. This city of 23,000 population, by means of a campaign for funds by popular subscriptions directed by the chamber of commerce, secured a civic fund of more than \$1,000,000 to build a "Greater Middletown." In the course of the next few years this money will be spent for the following purposes:⁷²

To provide the necessary additions to Middletown hospital.

To assist the board of education in increasing the compensation of the teachers of the public schools.

To extend the present system of parks and playgrounds.

To enlarge the new home of the Girls' Club.

To provide a fund for the Public Library.

⁷¹ Rockford, Ill., Chamber of Commerce; American City, Nov. 1918, p. 403.

⁷² Middletown, Ohio, Journal, April 1, 1920.

To erect a Community Memorial building.
To provide permanent headquarters in the Community Memorial building for the Middletown post of the American Legion.
To construct a new Y. M. C. A. building.
To give the city commission such financial assistance as that body may need for conduct of its affairs pending the proposed remedial legislation affecting taxation.
To provide funds for such other activities respecting the community development as the Chamber of Commerce may hereafter determine.

It is not necessary to extend this list of examples of city planning further. Suffice it to say that if it were not for such effort displayed by the chambers of commerce of the country, cities and towns would move along much more slowly than they do in matters of civic improvement.

Oftentimes, however, it is not feasible for the local chamber to engage in civic improvement on so large a scale as extensive city planning projects present. Perhaps it is not necessary that it should, but even in such cases do we find work of this character occupying front rank with the other affairs of the chamber. In its effort to serve the community many specific tasks are undertaken and carried on to a successful conclusion. It will serve our purpose to merely enumerate a number of such activities.

Some of the very common pieces of work that chambers of commerce accomplish for their communities are where they are instrumental in securing the necessary votes to float municipal bond issues for such purposes as waterworks improvement, sanitation and sewer extension and sewage disposal, street paving, fire and police departments, flood prevention, and parks and public playgrounds. They have often been responsible for the building of hotels by means of the organization of local hotel companies; also community buildings, city halls, municipal auditoriums, memorials of various kinds, and civic centers. In matters of civic beauty they have undertaken billboard

regulation, smoke abatement, annual clean-up and paint-up campaigns, ornamental street lighting, and hanging gardens for business buildings. They have raised money and paid off city deficits; during the taking of the recent census, they have checked upon enumerators and cooperated with census superintendents in order that correct counts might be made. Tax commissions and committees on public revenue, appointed from the membership of the chambers, have worked tirelessly and efficiently in order to report their findings back to the citizens of the community, that public taxation and public expenditures might be handled equitably and scientifically. All of these activities, taken singly and collectively, contribute almost inestimably to the growth and prosperity of the communities of this country.

There remains for consideration still another activity of local betterment and growth that may not be overlooked and in which chambers of commerce take the leading part, namely that of publicity. Someone has said that "community publicity is a subtle and strange thing, but it operates according to rules just as firmly established as those which govern the building and handling of any other piece of machinery."⁷³

Communities may be advertised in a number of different ways, one of which is by means of conventions. Sometimes undue emphasis is placed upon efforts to secure conventions; especially is this true where the town or city has a Chicago appetite with Podunk entertainment facilities. That is to say, a city will receive adverse publicity when it invites a convention to the community and then has inadequate hotel and auditorium accommodations to care for the convention when it gets there. A community cannot exercise too much care

in this regard, because if its guests that come as a result of a state or national convention are to be expected to favorably advertise it as a desirable place in which to live or to visit, those guests must necessarily go away from the convention feeling that the town was solicitous for all their wants, and that their desires and conveniences were adequately and thoughtfully looked after. If a city goes in for conventions, it must go in prepared to make good every time for failure to do so even once, is worse than if no conventions had been held at all.

Conventions not only give publicity to a community, but they are often profitable from a business sense. One convention board of a local chamber of commerce reports that during 1919, the city was host to 183 conventions of international, national and state associations, which brought to the city 83,000 visitors. It was conservatively estimated that these people expended while in the city not less than \$2,490,000.⁷⁴ Considered in terms of merchandise and services, such a sum is worth reckoning with by any community.

In times past it has been very customary for chambers of commerce and communities in general, to spend large sums of money in getting up folders and pamphlets describing in grossly exaggerated figures their so-called unexcelled advantages over all other cities in the way of locations for industrial establishments of every kind, and as health resorts for every ailment of which human flesh is heir. So flagrant and so far-fetched were these statements oftentimes, that they did a vast deal of harm and no bit of good to the organizations that distributed them. Alluring tales of get-rich-quick opportunities in real estate were designed to cause the uninitiated to reach quick-

⁷⁴Cleveland, Ohio. Report of Convention Board, Chamber of Commerce, 1919, p. 4.

ly for the hat and check-book, and as a consequence many communities have since lived to regret such enterprises, and many others are still wondering why their advertising appropriations vanished into thin air.

But a change has come as chambers of commerce have begun to realize that "booming" a community is not advertising it; that there is a difference between advertisements that tell the truth and statements that on their faces are branded lies; and that when one seeks the far ends of the earth for the "bluebird," he shall return only to find it in the little cabin from which he set forth.

The incident is told of a city in Michigan whose citizens once raised a fund of \$50,000 to be spent with the one end in view of securing factories; with an eye single to a horizon punctured with belching smoke-stacks. The money was so spent in three years, but it did not bring a single new industry to the town. When the money was about exhausted, the organization that had raised it met to wind up its affairs and to quit. It had decided that there was apparently nothing it could do to make the community grow. The motion had been made and seconded, when a leading citizen arose.

"We have spent our money," he said, "and haven't a thing to show for it. Perhaps we've been on the wrong track. While we've been trying to bring factories here we have overlooked our own city. The streets are cut of repair. We have no parks. Our schools, fire and police departments are a joke. The city hasn't enough civic pride to light a bonfire. Now, instead of going out of business, suppose we chip in for another fund and spend that money trying to improve our home city. Let us try it for a year, anyway."

His enthusiasm prevailed. At the end of the year the results

were such that the organization financed itself for another year, and then a third. To make the story short, \$50,000 had once been spent to get new factories, and not one was secured. Now the same amount had been spent in trying to see how good the town itself could be made, and the inventory showed more than a dozen new industries, and a gain of forty per cent in population. And withal, there were now good streets, good schools, several parks, and efficient fire and police protection.⁷⁵

As examples of the new type of community advertising the following "copy" of the matter of two such advertisements will serve to illustrate the modern appeal of a modern chamber of commerce:⁷⁶

ARE YOU A PRODUCER?

If you are, Weld County wants you. The richest farming valley in America has room for producers. A group of splendid pioneers struggled here, and made the prairie yield. We cannot do less than carry on their work. No idler, no malcontent, no prodigal can prosper here. The ideals of our forefathers forbid it.

Where men rejoice in toil; where visions grow into reality; where ideals mean accomplishment--that is where our pioneers have built their homes on the prairies.

If you come with a purpose, come to Weld County. Work side by side with men who love the land. Work where the spirit of community prevails. Work where work counts, and man is master of the soil.

DO YOU LOVE YOUR CHILDREN?

Do you want them to grow up among the right surroundings? Do you want them to have an education? Do you want them to have the opportunity to learn a profession that will make them independent? Do you want them to learn the spirit of the pioneers?

There is a valley where children count, where the people care enough to see that teachers are given a living wage, so that their children may have the best. In that

⁷⁵Parcelle, Walter, loc. cit., p. 541.

⁷⁶Greeley, Colorado, Chamber of Commerce, by Dorothy Kindred, Assistant Secretary, 1920.

valley, founded upon the spirit of freedom, children are taught the high ideals their forefathers fought to establish in the world.

These people care enough to see that their towns are made safe and clean for children, and the fight to stamp out vice and make it an unknown quantity is a successful one. That is the valley where people know the worth of these future citizens, the youth of our nation.

If you love your children, you want them to have the best chance that life affords. Bring them to the place where education comes first, and youth is precious.

Public Health and Sanitation. Community betterment is not confined to material improvement, important as that has been shown to be in the foregoing section. There are other phases of work wherein the modern chamber of commerce finds its services of great value to its constituents. The first of these is public health and sanitation.

As is customary in other activities before intelligent recommendations can be made or before definite procedure is undertaken, the chamber of commerce conducts a careful survey of the particular field to which it desires to direct its attention. In the matter of public health, therefore, we find that this work is first opened up by means of a health and sanitary survey of the community. Such a study includes the consideration of water supply, sewers, garbage disposal, board of health records, and adequacy of facilities for caring for the sick. It also includes child welfare, covering retarded and over-aged pupils in schools, children of pre-school age, hospital care available for mothers and infants, milk supply, boarding homes for infants and children, dispensaries, supervised play, kindergartens, nutritional classes, child labor, children in school, condition of schools, health work in schools, street trades, divorce records and disposition of children in divorce cases.⁷⁷

⁷⁷ Hamilton, O., Chamber of Commerce, Circular letter, Dec. 15, 1919.

When the survey has been made and the health situation of the community completely analyzed, the chamber of commerce, through its health committee, then attacks the problem. Because of its far-reaching effects, and because of the peculiar personal contacts that enter into the problem, a chamber seldom, if ever, undertakes to carry through a health program on its own account, but secures the cooperation of all agencies in the community that may be interested, including the municipal government. On the other hand, a chamber may also seek aid from the outside. For example, through the efforts of the local chamber of commerce, a sanitary program was undertaken in a southern city in which the leadership of a branch of the United States Public Health Service was secured. To this work, the chamber contributed extensive office space and supplied the workers with five automobiles for their convenience in getting around. Some of the things undertaken and accomplished were the analysis of the city water supply to determine its safety for human consumption; a survey of the sewerage system, resulting in the reduction of unsewered homes in the city to a negligible number; the installation of sanitary toilet conveniences in rural sections (adjacent to the watershed of the source of the city's water supply); drainage of all swamps in the vicinity of the city; installing an improved method of garbage disposal thoroughly systematized; regulation of public drink dispensaries and eating places; abolition of common roller towels and drinking cups; inspection of packing plants and dairies; adoption of a strict sanitary code for barber shops; establishment of a free clinic for inoculation against typhoid fever and the treatment of venereal diseases; and as a result of such a program the death rate in that city has been materially reduced.⁷⁸

⁷⁸ Fort Worth, Tex. Chamber of Commerce; Amer. City, Nov. 1918, p. 413.

A health campaign of this character is invaluable to the community, and it is lasting in its effect. It is not uncommon for the local chamber to enlist local police force for sanitary inspection duty; to secure the services of the city and its health department for the extermination of disease breeding spots; and to conduct effective fly extermination campaigns. In one city the chamber has had plans drawn for a contagious disease hospital commensurate with the needs of the city and county.⁷⁹ What an advancement such a hospital is over the old abominable "pest house" so common throughout the country!

Were it not for the persistent effort of the chamber of commerce, many a community that now enjoys the benefits of the services of a public health officer would still be without one. It is largely through educational propoganda of one kind or another that the importance and necessity of a public health nurse or public health officer are made manifest to the local city authorities. When once employed such an officer, as a city employee, becomes almost indispensable because he gives his attention to such things as the city's milk supply, and cooperates with local physicians in cases of contagious diseases and sometimes maintains and operates a contagious disease clinic.⁸⁰

During one of the recent influenza epidemics that swept over the country, a local board of commerce cooperated with other local agencies in establishing a community kitchen to provide soups, gruel, and other easily digestible food for influenza patients who lay ill in homes where no one was able to do such cooking, and also to provide

⁷⁹ Harrisburg, Pa., Chamber of Commerce; Community Leadership, Jan. 15, 1920, p. 6.

⁸⁰ Bath, Me., Achievements of Successful Chambers of Commerce, p. 11.

hot dishes for the nurses and well children in such families. The nurses and doctors agreed that the service rendered to the poorer families, especially in those cases where several members of the same family had been attacked simultaneously with the disease, was invaluable.⁸¹

When permanent public improvements are needed in the way of a municipal hospital, the local chamber of commerce very often conducts the campaign that puts over the necessary bond issue. A serious need for the erection of a sanatorium for the treatment of incipient cases of tuberculosis arose in an eastern city, and by means of a vigorous campaign conducted by the health committee of the local chamber, an issue of county bonds sufficient to erect a fully equipped institution of this kind was carried in a special election by an overwhelming majority.⁸² Endowments for hospitals, locations of hygienic laboratories, and public medical dispensaries are often brought into being in the same way.

Perhaps there is no greater service that a chamber of commerce renders to its community than when it undertakes to establish a thoroughgoing program of child welfare. The following quotation from a set of resolutions adopted by the New Jersey State Chamber Federation, a subsidiary of the New Jersey State Chamber of Commerce, serves to illustrate how earnestly and how seriously the matter of child welfare is considered by chambers of commerce today:⁸³

"Whereas, the people of New Jersey have forcibly declared themselves for the adoption by the state of a definite policy of child conservation....."

"Be it resolved that child conservation is of vital concern to each community in New Jersey and that it can

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82 Manistee, Mich., Board of Commerce, American City, May 1919, p. 477.

83 Akron, Ohio, Chamber of Commerce, Year-book 1919-1920, p. 52.

American City, Feb. 1920, p. 189.

best be accomplished through concerted effort and unified action under a program defined by the Division of Child Hygiene of the State Department of Health, and

"Be it further resolved that the State Chamber Federation urge each local organization to take active steps in its community to further child conservation and give all possible assistance to make its state program effective."

In pursuance of such recommendations, one of the local chambers in that state immediately placed at the disposal of its community an effective program for child welfare work. The Board of Education, the Recreation Commission and the Chamber of Commerce, acting under the leadership of the chamber, has jointly obtained a physical director in both schools and playgrounds, under whom the health of the children will be studied from every point of view. Medical examinations, both in school and playgrounds, school nursing, and a new dental clinic, all come under the supervision of this one head, so that in every phase of the school life the child may have intelligent physical care.⁸⁴

But child welfare extends to other children besides those of school age. One of the first undertakings of a recently reorganized chamber of commerce was to reduce the infant mortality rate in its community, which, up to that time, with but one exception, was the highest of any in the United States. Upon investigation the chamber's committee found that this high mortality rate was due to ignorance on the part of foreign mothers in the care of their babies, and also the inability of the poorer people to feed their babies milk because of the prohibitive price. To meet these conditions, two special committees were appointed, one to direct an educational campaign on the care of children and the other to reduce the price of milk. The educational campaign served to teach the mothers of the city the

⁸⁴ Patterson, N. J., Chamber of Commerce; Community Leadership, Mar. 25, 1920, p. 2.

proper care and feeding of their children, and the other committee caused a centralized modern dairy plant to be established to take in all the farmers' milk, reducing the cost to the consumer two cents a quart without any reduction to the producer, and the efforts of the two committees together increased the consumption of milk from 20,000 quarts to 35,000 quarts a day.⁸⁵

In similar manner it is possible to find chambers of commerce all over the country actively engaged in educational and other campaigns for the avowed purpose of saving the infants, the children and the youth of the land. An interesting plan has been used in a western state whereby the local commercial organization cooperated with the Extension Division of the State University and the Child Welfare Department of the State Women's Council of Defense, before the latter organization was dissolved. By such an arrangement a Child Welfare Institute was held in the community over a period of days which afforded a special opportunity for education by lectures and demonstrations in this important phase of social life.⁸⁶

The illustrations given could be multiplied again and again, but enough references have been made to carry home the point illustrating how the modern chamber of commerce attacks the vital problem of child conservation in connection with its general program of public health and sanitation.

Education. That there is nothing more valuable to a community than its educational facilities, and that there is no undertaking in which the local chamber of commerce can with more profit invest its time and attention than in education, are statements too trite

⁸⁵ Fall River, Mass., Chamber of Commerce, *Ibid.*, Jan. 1, 1920, p. 3.
⁸⁶ Longmont, Colo., Commercial Association, *Annual Report*, 1919, p. 3.

to require much emphasis. And yet many people seem to lose sight of the fact that education is one of the foundation stones in community building. Because education is so important, chambers of commerce are giving their hearty support to it in increasing numbers year by year, until the influence of these bodies have come to be recognized even from a national standpoint.

In a letter sent out recently by the United States Commissioner of Education, the following statement was made:⁸⁷

"The emergency in education in the United States arising out of the present and prospective shortage of teachers, the necessity for large increases in funds for the support of schools of all kinds and grades, and the need for readjusting programs of education to the requirements of the new era are, I believe, so great as to justify the calling of a national conference of representative citizens to consider the pressing problems of education from the standpoint of statesmanship and the public welfare.

"For many reasons Chambers of Commerce, Boards of Trade and other similar bodies are directly and vitally interested in education and can render great and important service in the improvement and better support not only of the schools of their own cities, but of the schools of all kinds and grades throughout their States. I am therefore inviting and urging all such bodies in the more important cities of the country to send one or more representatives to this conference for the purpose of taking part in the proceedings of the conference and of carrying back to the bodies which they represent an account of the work of the conference and something of its spirit."

In the same connection, as a result of a conference of secretaries of chambers of commerce and of superintendents of schools which was held in Cleveland on Feb. 24, 1920, a National Committee for Chamber of Commerce Cooperation with the Public Schools was formed for the purpose of analyzing the school situation and determining the facts on which to base school plans in the future. The chambers of commerce of the country were asked to take the lead in a campaign which should organize community forces in support of the schools, and

⁸⁷Claxton, P. P., U.S. Commissioner of Education, Letter of Apr. 9, 1920

through local publicity and personal contact acquaint the citizen taxpayer with public school service and its needs, and to secure an intelligent and adequate support for a program of improvements.

The first undertaking of this committee was to set out to secure the facts of the whole national situation in order that its recommendations might result in effective service. Five separate inquiries were accordingly prepared and sent out, covering the following subjects:⁸⁸

Inquiry Number One

How much training do your teachers have? How well do you pay your school employees? What special inducements do you offer the teachers in your schools?

Inquiry Number Two

How well do you house your school children?

Inquiry Number Three

What is your educational program?

Inquiry Number Four

How adequately do you safeguard the children's health?

Inquiry Number Five

How much does education cost your city? How will the rising costs be met?

While at the present writing not enough time has as yet elapsed for the returns to come in as a result of the inquiries referred to, the movement itself is indicative of the seriousness with which modern chambers of commerce are considering educational problems.

In the midst of the problems of the shortage of teachers and inadequate school facilities due to the cessation of building operations during the years of the war, we find local chambers of commerce everywhere recommending in no uncertain terms increases in salaries that teachers of high caliber might be retained in the schools, and

⁸⁸ National Committee for Chamber of Commerce Cooperation with the Public Schools, New York. Circular, May 1920.

in managing bond campaigns for buildings and equipment, and all with telling effect.

An interesting phase of chamber of commerce work closely associated with the public schools, is that of the organization of junior chambers of commerce, the members of which are the young people in the public schools of the community. In one city a Girls' Chamber of Commerce was organized by the young women attending the local high school. This rather novel organization was the outgrowth of the Junior Chamber of Commerce maintained by the boys. Both are patterned after the senior chamber, and both are finding their places in the civic betterment of the city.⁸⁹

In another city a clearing house has been established through which the graduates of the city's educational institutions, especially the high schools, who complete their courses with creditable records, will be helped into the positions for which they are best fitted as soon as they leave school. A committee of the chamber of commerce composed of prominent educators and business men secured the registration with it of all members of the senior classes, stating the lines of business they expected to follow after graduation. The plan was approved by the superintendent of schools, and the board of education authorized certain courses of study in conformity with the need for specialized training in the industries and general commercial interests of the city. The whole plan revolves around the idea that the high school and college pupils of today are the business men and women of tomorrow, and that it is essential that they be shown the value of cooperation and be made to realize that the cen-

⁸⁹ Kansas City, Kans., Chamber of Commerce; American City, Mar. 1919, p. 273.

tral business organization of the city is vitally interested in their future development and prosperity.⁹⁰

The educational problem of a community is a many-sided affair, and besides the public school system itself, we find a great many other things entering in, to which the local chamber of commerce must needs give its attention, and one of these is vocational education. History shows that in the decade between 1890 and 1900, chambers of commerce in the leading cities of Germany, such as Berlin and Hamburg, undertook commercial training of young men for mercantile and consular service, resulting in a higher order of talent for such pursuits. In 1899 the United States undertook something of a similar nature. In that year the Chamber of Commerce of New York endowed a chair for lectures on commerce at Columbia University, and the Chicago Association of Commerce likewise established a chair of commerce at Chicago University.⁹¹

For a dozen years or more thereafter very little activity took place on the part of American chambers of commerce in the way of vocational or industrial education. With the organization of the Chamber of Commerce of the United States, however, we find a renewed interest in education of this type. At the first annual meeting of this body, held in Washington on January 22, 1913, a resolution adopted and later presented to Congress, included the following:⁹²

"It is necessary that the youth of the land be educated to intelligent lives of service and efficiency in chosen occupations--

"Therefore, Resolved, That the establishment of vocational schools of manufacture, commerce, agriculture and home economics throughout the land is imperative, and to the end

⁹⁰ Dallas, Tex., Chamber of Commerce; American City, Dec. 1918, pp. 507-9.

⁹¹ Encyclopedia Americana, Vol. 6, pp. 264-5.

⁹² Nation's Business, Jan. 28, 1913, p. 4.

that action may everywhere be stimulated and wisely directed, federal aid and encouragement is essential."

Subsequently, in 1914, legislation known as the Smith-Lever Act was enacted for federal cooperation with the states in giving instruction in agriculture and household economics on the farm. The law offered federal appropriations to the states only when they had prepared themselves to receive it for specific purposes, had formulated definite plans for expenditure, and had ready for use to the same end state funds at least equal to the funds to be received from the United States.⁹³

Agricultural education alone did not fill the bill as specified by the national chamber, and it at once set about to secure legislation that would include continuation courses in trade and industry. A referendum vote by the membership was taken in 1916, in which 85 per cent of the votes cast favored the legislation that was being supported by the chamber. As a result, the efforts for a new law were prosecuted with greater vigor than ever, and on February 23, 1917, the Smith-Hughes Act became a law which extended federal aid to educational extension in trade and industry. Few people realize to what a great degree the chambers of commerce of this country, through their central organization, were responsible for the passing of this important legislation.

The Smith-Hughes Act has made it possible for communities everywhere to engage in vocational education, whereas, if such schools had to be dependent upon local funds alone, they would never have gotten under way. Trade schools, night schools, and cooperative schools are all illustrations of the efforts that are now being put forth by chambers of commerce to supply training to those persons who, for

⁹³ *Ibid.*, Feb. 1917, p. 24.

various reasons, do not find it possible to remain in the regular schools.

Vocational training on the cooperative basis promises great possibilities. The vocational training committee of one enterprising chamber of commerce arranged a plan with the local manufacturers' bureau and board of education by which thirty graduates of the eighth grade entered the high school for a special vocational course. These students spend alternate weeks in the school and in the factories, two students alternating on the same job. The boys are allowed full choice of vocations, and their factory training is of the most practical nature. One evening each month there are held a short business talk and educational motion pictures of an industrial character to which all of the boys attend. The work of the boys in the school and in the factory is in the charge of a trained man who gives all of his time to coordination and supervision in order to make the course as efficient as possible.⁹⁴

Very closely associated with vocational or industrial education is Americanization. The teaching of Americanization is one of the results of the late war. There is no question but what we have had our Americanization and citizenship problems with us for a long time, and it is also true that some attention had been given to these problems in scattered localities, more especially in the large cities, but it took the world war and our participation in it to bring them into the spot-light. We came to see that the promotion of citizenship among our aliens and a wider understanding of American principles among all classes not only improved the capacity and intelligence of individuals, but also removed those disloyally inclined from false

⁹⁴Port Huron, Mich., Achievements of Successful Chambers of Commerce, p. 47.

leaders with their doctrines of sabotage and violence. In every section of the country, therefore, during the past five years, have we found extensive activity in teaching American ideals of freedom and self-government to those who need this instruction, and included in this work is that of the teaching of reading and writing in the English language.

As might be expected, chambers of commerce are among the most energetic organizations in the field. The work they have undertaken have ranged all the way from small neighborhood classes of a few individuals to elaborate districting of large cities, with large financial budgets and highly organized corps of instructors.⁹⁵ In some places they have been instrumental in starting classes in many of the large industrial plants, and workers who do not speak or understand English are required to attend on the employers' time. While the results that have been attained vary, they amply justify all the expenditures of time and money that they have entailed.

Besides these rather definite problems of education, the local chamber of commerce also finds something to do along lines more or less popular in their nature. Chief among these are the maintenance of public libraries and the conducting of chautauquas. With respect to the former, chambers of commerce have often found it necessary to conduct campaigns for funds to prevent local libraries already established from closing, and in other cases to secure money to maintain them properly. One chamber, finding its community without any library whatever, succeeded in establishing a 500-volume branch of the traveling library of the state. At the same time it started a cam-

⁹⁵ Boston, Mass., Chamber of Commerce, Annual Report, May 17, 1920, p. 4.

paign for the collection of two or three thousand volumes to be used as a nucleus for a permanent library in the future.⁹⁶

Chautauquas are recognized in many localities as very necessary adjuncts to the popular educational facilities of the community. Since they are community-wide in their scope, it usually falls to the lot of the local chamber to see that they are arranged for and properly financed, and if they fail to pay out, the chamber carries the deficit over to the next season, or pays it outright with current funds.

Then there are historical societies, and reading clubs and other groups. For example, such a reading club has been organized by a wide awake secretary in order that the members of the chamber might be kept informed in regard to what chambers of commerce are doing generally. Fifteen members constitute a club, and each club is furnished with an assortment of printed matter conveniently arranged with instructions to keep for a number of days, and when read, to pass on to the next member of the club as indicated by an accompanying list. In this way Mr. Average Citizen is being educated in the work, not only of his own, but of many other commercial organizations, and by knowing, becomes sympathetic and a more useful member.⁹⁷

Finally, there needs to be mentioned the success with which chambers of commerce have undertaken the location of special schools and colleges within their communities. Work of this kind has often required the gift of sites, money donations, extensive publicity campaigns, and a multitude of other activities that could only be handled by the local civic organizations. In education, as in all the

⁹⁶ East Palestine, Ohio, Chamber of Commerce; Community Leadership, Feb. 12, 1920, p. 3.

⁹⁷ Middletown, N. Y., Chamber of Commerce; American City, Nov. 1918, p. 405.

other relationships necessary for the growth and development of the modern town and city, the chamber of commerce has found its well-defined duties and is discharging these duties in a manner that reflects credit upon the whole movement.

Recreation and Amusements. With the tendency toward fewer working hours in the week for everybody, and the requirement of time for eating and sleeping remaining the same, there remains an ever increasing margin of hours per day and per week that must be taken up in some manner. For the most part, surplus hours are given over to recreation and amusement, and because this is true, the play element in community life is not a matter to be passed idly by as being of no consequence. Chambers of commerce of today have recognized this fact clearly and in their programs we often find considerable attention given to this subject.

In the consideration of public parks and playgrounds, when others have given up or refused to try to supply such places of public recreation, it has often remained for the local chamber to take the initiative and launch a movement with the object in view of developing forbidding territory into the most attractive of parks. A city in Canada some years ago acquired by purchase a tract of waste land on both sides of a river flowing through the community. For a long time nothing was done with this property, and then through the activities of the chamber of commerce, work was commenced to make this a beautiful public park; one of the finest in all that region. The members of that same chamber bought two large vacant lots in one of the congested wards of the city. The rubbish upon these lots was cleared away and a splendid playground fitted up for the children of that part of the community. It is the intention of the chamber to pre-

sent this children's park to the city as a model of what the civic authorities ought to do in every ward.⁹⁸ An example of a similar undertaking is the conversion of a stretch of sand dunes on the eastern shore of Lake Michigan into a pleasant summer resort equipped with a lake front asphalt boulevard, water, gas, electricity and telephones, all because a local chamber of commerce had a vision and courage to carry out its dream.⁹⁹

In a northern city the local organization assisted in completing the arrangements which made possible the building of a summer camp for girls, an enterprise that has proved a success from the start, as well as of great benefit to the girls who come there from many sections of the country.¹⁰⁰ In this category we find provisions for summer outings for boys, municipal wharfs, country clubs, mountain parks, and similar facilities for recreation.

There is another phase of recreation in which chambers of commerce are becoming prominent, namely that of music. Foremost among the accomplishments in this line has been the management of annual music festivals. An eastern community, in conducting its annual concert in this manner, has been able to care for a musical course costing \$10,000, and having upon it some of the leading artists of the world.¹⁰¹ Through the instrumentality of the recreation committee of another chamber of commerce, a reorganization of an obscure orchestra was effected with the result that the citizens of that city are now privileged to hear music of high class furnished by their own

⁹⁸ Guelph, Canada, Chamber of Commerce; Achievements of Successful Chambers of Commerce, p. 38.

⁹⁹ Michigan City, Ind., Chamber of Commerce; American City, Jan. 1920, p. 63.

¹⁰⁰ Rhinelander, Wisc., Advancement Association, Annual Report, 1919.

¹⁰¹ Bangor, Me., Chamber of Commerce; Community Leadership, Jan. 15, 1920, p. 5.

orchestra on Sunday afternoons and during the winter seasons, and the remarkable part is that most of the musicians are workmen from local factories.¹⁰² In a southern city the local chamber conducted a series of Sunday afternoon sacred concerts by the choirs of the different churches, and in a Canadian community the music bureau of the board of trade presented to the music lovers of the city a three-day musical festival with attractions of high merit, and at prices within the reach of all.¹⁰³ And yet again another organization reports that it has vigorously supported the municipal band, which, through its efforts, has been able to afford a competent director, as well as being outfitted in proper uniforms.¹⁰⁴

These illustrations are merely typical, but they show how successfully a chamber of commerce may promote musical entertainment in a community and thus afford the citizens a means of wholesome recreation which cannot be had in any other way.

Closely related to the activity in musical lines are community dramatics. It is often customary for chambers of commerce to hold annual stunt nights, which usually include musical comedies, operas, dramatic sketches of local color, or some other undertakings of similar nature, but in every case prepared and presented by local talent. In a southern city the drama committee of the chamber, composed entirely of women, promoted an "Evening of Drama," in which the local schools, a college and the literary and social clubs of the community participated. Not only did this occasion provide an opportunity for recreation of a high type, but the proceeds were devoted

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Gloversville, N. Y., Chamber of Commerce: American City, Jan. 1920, p. 69.

¹⁰³Community Leadership, Mar. 25, 1920, p. 2.

¹⁰⁴Fort Scott, Kans., Chamber of Commerce, Annual Report, 1919.

to a fund for a scholarship for a high school girl.¹⁰⁵

The amusements of a community for young and old also come in for their share of attention. For example, we find properly fitting into the year's activities of one chamber the building of a \$50,000 skating rink in order that the hundreds of boys and girls living in that city might enjoy clean sports and thereby become better and more contented citizens.¹⁰⁶ Likewise a bowling league was organized by the recreation committee of another chamber of commerce. Handsome trophies and prizes were offered to the winning teams and to individual bowlers, both by firms and by the chamber itself. Spirited contests have been carried on, and so satisfied has been the committee with the men's league that it has also formed a bowling league for women, intended for those who are engaged in business as office executives or employed in various manufacturing plants. The women are given exclusive use of the public alleys on certain days.¹⁰⁷ For still other interests a fish and game committee is maintained by one chamber, its purpose being to assist in looking after the pleasures and desires of the fishermen and hunters of the city and county. To this end such things as fish hatcheries, game preserves, and tournaments for nim-rods and casting enthusiasts constitute the major part of this committee's work.¹⁰⁸

To summarize, the inquiry into the activities of the modern chamber of commerce shows that, in one way or another, and in one place or another, varying as to locality and peculiar circumstances, it touches the field of recreation very vitally. It studies and re-

¹⁰⁵ Roanoke, Va., Chamber of Commerce: Annual Report, 1920, p.11.

¹⁰⁶ Guelph, Canada, Chamber of Commerce, loc. cit.

¹⁰⁷ Albany, N. Y., Chamber of Commerce: American City, Mar. 1920, p. 313.

¹⁰⁸ Akron, Ohio, Chamber of Commerce: Year Book, 1919-1920, p. 49.

commends its findings to the proper authorities such things as commercialized recreation, including conditions in soft drink parlors, pool rooms, picture shows, and dance halls; non-commercialized recreation, including school buildings with their playgrounds and equipment, auditoriums, activities of school children, recreational activities of churches, and playgrounds and parks; the activities of Boy Scouts, Camp Fire Girls, community houses, Y. M. C. A., Y. W. C. A., Knights of Columbus, fraternal organizations and factories; also loafing, vacant lot and street play. It is because of exhaustive surveys and unbiased considerations of this kind that chambers of commerce have been able to accomplish so much that is desirable and lasting in this extremely important part of community life.

Charities and Community Morals. There seems to be a definite relation between delinquents and dependents, law and order and morality in the social strata of our cities. But these subjects, while fully as important as any in the field of civic betterment, have not been given the same attention by the chambers of commerce over the country, as have the other social problems that have been previously described in this chapter. The reason for this probably is that these organizations have very generally considered charities and community morals outside of their sphere of action, or else they have been amply cared for by other bodies better fitted to enter such a more or less specialized field. And yet we do find the subject of charities coming in for greater consideration year by year. In over a hundred cities in America the chambers of commerce have taken on the function of checking up the local social agencies that appeal to

the public for contributions.¹⁰⁹

Charitable work on the part of local chambers finds its expression in a number of different ways, the most common of which is the endorsement committee. The purpose of such a committee is to consider carefully all solicitations for funds for charitable purposes and to recommend their worthiness of support to the members of the organization. To secure more effective control the endorsement card is provided which places the chamber behind the soliciting agency as sponsor. In the matter of control it is as effective as a definite license, since a charity without such an endorsement is deprived of much of its support. In one city eighty per cent of the givers are members of the chamber of commerce.

The records of the department of charities endorsement of one chamber shows that over nine hundred firm members and individuals consulted it regularly regarding the disposition of their donations, depending upon the committee to outline for them some definite policy affecting the distribution of their benevolence. The economic saving to the community, to individuals and to the reputable organizations, by the elimination of unworthy appeals, has been very great and were it possible to even estimate the amount saved, the figures would be surprisingly large.

This charities endorsement committee has nipped in the bud many schemes in process of development before appeals to the public could be made, and it has succeeded directly, and without unpleasant publicity, in interesting the proper authorities in a large number of fraudulent appeals, which have been disposed of in a satisfactory

¹⁰⁹ Kelso, Robert W., *Endorsements of Charities by Chambers of Commerce*: *National Municipal Review*, Mar. 1920, pp. 156-160.

manner. The cooperation of the United States authorities, the local police department and other organizations, has enabled this committee to put out of business many of these illegal schemes and solicitors who might otherwise have fattened themselves at the expense of the donors and legitimate charitable organizations.¹¹⁰

But intelligent sanction cannot be given without the development of standards in social service, so that the chamber must also become community supervisor; it must cease to represent its own members only, and must become agent for all the people of the community. It is interesting to find that as chambers of commerce have widened their spheres of influence in community activity, there has come about a corresponding broadening perspective and desire for greater business efficiency among charitable societies, and as a consequence a new outgrowth of the endorsement movement has occurred, known as "the financial federation." Through it the chambers of commerce have sought to render the supervisory instrument more nearly coextensive with the entire public than the commercial body of such could be, and to unify the group of social agencies to a greater degree than under the old endorsement plan.

The essentials of the federation plan call for a council or union of a portion or all of the social agencies of the community, in which the governing board is usually selected by the affiliated organizations. The federation will then pool the collection of funds and apportion them to the charities of the city. There are many features about the federation plan that do not meet the approval of the "socially-minded" citizens to be found in most large cities. The reason for this is that because in its paramount work of bringing

¹¹⁰ San Francisco, Calif., Chamber of Commerce: Activities, Jan. 9, 1919.

in funds necessitating "whirlwind campaigns," it cannot be depended upon to establish deep and permanent interest in social work, and often undesigned giving tends to eliminate social thinking on the part of the public.

Whether the federation is theoretically correct is another question which does not concern this inquiry, but that it gets the money, there can be no mistake, and a search in 1917 revealed the fact that forty-eight cities in the United States and Canada had been or were at that time considering the formation of financial federations.¹¹¹

The subject of community morals is one that has been particularly difficult to treat by so popular an organization as the chamber of commerce. Crime, segregated vice districts, and juvenile delinquency are all problems that suggest laws and police authority in their solution, and yet they are at the same time problems that vitally concern every community in its commercial and industrial growth, as well as in its civic prosperity.

When a social menace has found its way into a city, and when such an evil is not being combatted successfully, very often it is possible for the local chamber of commerce to play its hand with telling effect.) As an illustration of a case in point, reference may be made to the development of the Chicago Crime Commission. This commission had its origin in a special committee appointed by the Chicago Association of Commerce to study crime in the city, especially crimes of violence. After many months of hard work, the committee reported its conclusions, and recommended that a permanent organization be formed to wage an aggressive war against evil-doers. The

¹¹¹ Kelso, Robert W., *op. cit.*

association promptly acted on this suggestion, and under its auspices the Chicago Crime Commission was formed, its purpose being to check crimes of violence and drive criminals from the city, and to do this the whole field of police department, courts, juries, mental defectives and criminal records were gone into.¹¹²

The eradication of the social evil and the abatement of "red light districts" are also sometimes undertaken in communities through the powerful influence of the local chamber. A western oil town found itself honey-combed with prostitution, commercialized and clandestine, in a manner with which the local authorities seemed unable to cope. Soon after the organization of a chamber of commerce in that community had taken place, enough pressure was brought to bear upon certain property owners and upon citizens generally that the pernicious "line" with its disease-spreading dens of vice was closed up and the inmates sent out of the city.¹¹³

The lack of attention often given to juvenile delinquency has caused chambers of commerce in various places to give serious consideration to this problem. As a result of its study of child-welfare conditions, the chamber of commerce of one city formulated the following demands which were presented to the local municipal authorities:¹¹⁴ (1) Modern, adequate and sufficient juvenile detention home; (2) Immediate establishment of an isolation hospital; (3) Appointment of two additional probation officers attached to juvenile court; (4) Selection of permanent welfare committee to serve as an advisory body to the juvenile court.

¹¹² Chicago, Ill., Association of Commerce: American City, Mar. 1919, p. 272.

¹¹³ Casper, Wyo., 1920.

¹¹⁴ Dayton, Ohio, Chamber of Commerce: Organization Service, U. S. Chamber of Commerce, Mar. 1, 1920, p. 2.

In a similar manner another chamber considers that the most important work directly promoted by its civic department was the establishment of a juvenile court in the city. While the campaign to secure this court was undertaken by committees representing a number of organizations, the investigation and initial steps were taken by the Woman's Division of the civic department of the chamber, with the result that the community now has not only the court, but three probation officers and two detention homes where the juvenile offenders are tried and held and helped.¹¹⁵

It is significant to observe that in many places there is the closest cooperation between the chamber of commerce and the churches and religious organizations of the community. Such an association is having a wholesome effect not only upon the chamber of commerce, but upon the religious forces also. It has been said that "it would be a short-sighted policy to save men's souls and then send them back to unclean homes, expecting them to make the most of their new-found religion. We simply can't forget that men have bodies--that these bodies must be cared for, fed, and properly housed; and the Church that is the most useful to the community and truest to the teachings of real religion is that organization which saves both the body and the soul."¹¹⁶

Quasi Public Organizations. While the chamber of commerce may be said to be the chief civic organization in every progressive community, this does not mean that it absorbs or displaces all other public organizations having civic interests as their main purpose.

¹¹⁵ Roanoke, Va., Chamber of Commerce: Annual Report, 1920, p. 10.

¹¹⁶ Stelzle, Charles, The Social Unit and the Church, p. 4.

Any body of this nature that has been established for a definite purpose finds in the local chamber of commerce an adviser and helper, and instead of competitors in the field of community service, the chamber serves as a clearing-house or central bureau whose more extensive equipment is always ready for use for any legitimate purpose which the other organizations might wish to undertake. It will serve the purpose of this inquiry to refer to a few of the most prominent organizations of this kind, and to point out typical instances of cooperation, the number of which could be multiplied many times.

One of the leading public organizations in most communities of any considerable size is that of the Young Men's Christian Association. While this organization is essentially religious in character, and while the ultimate end of all its work is Christianity in its broader and non-sectarian sense, yet the scope of its activities is community-wide, particularly as it affects the men and boys in that community. Many chambers have recognized the great service that the Y. M. C. A. renders and have been of material assistance in campaigns for the purpose of raising funds for Y. M. C. A. buildings, as well as in the annual drives for money to carry on the local work. They have stimulated interest in physical classes among business men under the supervision of the Y. M. C. A., and often, too, the directorates of the chamber of commerce and the Young Men's Christian Association have overlapped so that the men who have directed the affairs of one have also had in hand the direction of the affairs of the other.

Another organization that is growing in prominence throughout the country is that of the Boy Scouts of America. Seeing the great value of this movement in training boys to become better men, we find the chamber of commerce taking the initiative in creating local coun-

cials and in securing paid scout executives to carry on the work with the boys of the community. There is no city or town, either large or small, that does not have its boy problem, and the importance of maintaining such organizations as the Y. M. C. A. and the Boy Scouts, each distinctive in its efforts, cannot be over-estimated, and it is quite within the province of the modern chamber of commerce to lend its influence in this direction wherever it can.

Since the close of the world war there has come into being the American Legion, an organization of war veterans. Because no community, even though ever so remotely situated, was without its representative in this great conflict, the American Legion in its organization is coextensive with the boundaries of the country. Its membership is composed of the finest type of manhood America can muster, and as the power of the men was felt when they were under arms, so also is it being felt in the more peaceful pursuits of civil life. Throughout the country, therefore, chambers of commerce are lending their services in assisting in the establishment of legion posts. Headquarters are furnished, memorials are erected, and in other minor details, such as office space and publicity, have the chambers made themselves useful to the returned soldiers and sailors. In the same class of organization may be included the local chapters of the American Red Cross. This organization, since its war activities have for the most part ceased, is performing invaluable relief work throughout the land, and chambers of commerce have cooperated everywhere in financial campaigns and otherwise in support of its activities.

Women's organizations also find their places in this general plan of working together for civic betterment. While the temperance

question was still uppermost in the interests of many communities, chambers of commerce entered very actively into the support of the Women's Christian Temperance Union and other prohibition forces, and there is no question but what the country went dry as soon as it did because the business interests of the several states played a hand in the game. Sentiment and morals no doubt had much to do with the destruction of the saloon evil, but it was not till liquor became a real economic question that its doom was sealed. Whiskey and good business cannot mix, and when the influence of commercial organizations and the united opinions of business men said the liquor traffic must go, it went.

Likewise do the chambers of commerce cooperate with Parent-Teachers Associations in their extensive programs of tying up the schools to the homes of the community; and with the Federation of Women's Clubs and similar organizations in their civic activities. It is of considerable interest to observe to what extent the women of our towns and cities participate in chamber of commerce work. An analysis of this subject was recently made by the American City Bureau, which found that in spite of the general presence of women in nearly all business and professional activities, comparatively few women are participating in chamber of commerce work in a large way. And yet in twenty-eight out of 138 organizations reporting, the women were said to be doing very creditable work.

In the chambers where the women are members in regular standing and in some cases members of the boards of directors, there appears to be little confusion as to what they should do. They usually serve on committees engaged in civic work, and upon these committees the women are ready and able workers. The following list gives some idea

of the committee activities in which women are taking part: ¹¹⁷

Americanization	Home Nursing
Art Exhibits	Housing
Charities	Night Schools
Children's Clinics	Playgrounds and Recreation
Child Welfare	Public Health
City Beautification	Public Library
City Planning	Public Markets
Clean-up Campaigns	Smoke Abatement
Community Buildings	Schools
Community Music	Soldiers' Celebrations
Home Gardens	Vocational Education
Hospital Social Service	

Since the commercial organization field is widening year by year, it is the general feeling that within the next few years an increasing number of women will do active work in the chambers of commerce of the country. In some communities even now such activity is secured through Women's Auxiliaries of the chamber composed of public-spirited women who are ambitious to cooperate with the central body in its community undertakings. ¹¹⁸

There remains for consideration one other group of organizations, perhaps the most active and the most important of all, namely the so-called noonday luncheon clubs, such as the Rotary, the Lions and the Kiwanis Clubs, and various others of the same type. There are some people who would confuse the work of clubs of this character with the functions of the chamber of commerce, and suppose that the one supplants the other, and that where one exists the other is not needed. That they are not identical and that both types of organizations flourish best where they both exist together, are the real facts in the case. Quoting from an article in a recent number of the official magazine of such a club, is the following: ¹¹⁹

¹¹⁷ Community Leadership, Mar. 11, 1920, p. 3.

¹¹⁸ Macon, Ga., Chamber of Commerce: Review of Activities, 1919,

¹¹⁹ p. 11.

¹¹⁹ Bierce, Lee H., in The Lions Club Magazine, Mar. 1920, pp. 179-180.

"At first there was some anxiety as to whether or not the formation of so many of these noon luncheon clubs would prove detrimental to the best interests of the Association of Commerce and possibly have a tendency to weaken that organization through lack of interest and withdrawal of memberships. Just the opposite has proven true.....It seems to be a much easier matter now to interest a man in the Association of Commerce when he belongs to a noon luncheon club than before he made the connection. Furthermore, it is very awkward for him to resign from the Association of Commerce and retain his membership in the luncheon club because through the latter connection he realizes the necessity of a chamber of commerce to the proper development of a community and the responsibility he owes such an organization."

From the regular publication of a similar organization, national in its scope, the following has been taken:¹²⁰

"It is not the burden-bearer of other institutions. It is only the inspiration which helps other institutions bear their own burdens.

"We must never confound Rotary with the idea that it is a ready instrument through which other organizations may function. Other organizations do not function through Rotary. Rotary functions through other organizations.

"There will be no duplication of effort. In towns where there is no chamber of commerce or other similar body, Rotarians will see that such a body is organized. In towns where such bodies exist and have perhaps ceased to function, Rotarians will bring them to life. In towns too small for such organizations and where an example of civic activity is needed to promote a public service, Rotarians will inspire a sufficient number of men, together with their help, to do the work--not as a Rotary Club, to which some of the best workers do not belong, but as a community."

It is clear, therefore, that instead of interfering with the efforts of the chamber of commerce, these clubs constitute storehouses of energy and inspiration upon which the chamber may draw. By means of the cooperation of these clubs it is possible to reach a greater number of business men when momentum is essential to the success of an enterprise. As an illustration of this close cooperation, the Kiwanis Club and the Rotary Club of one community entered into a contest to secure memberships for the local commercial organ-

¹²⁰The Rotarian, Feb. 1920, pp. 67-68.

ization and through their united efforts the membership was increased more than 280 per cent.¹²¹

We have seen throughout this chapter how comprehensive are the community relationships of the modern chamber of commerce. That not only does it give dynamic force to the demands of business, industry, and commerce, but that it also engages in a very large way in the solution of those "problems of a community which have an immediate and important influence upon the lives and well-being of cities and states, and consequently upon the country as a whole--the problem of the conservation of the nation's health; the betterment of living conditions; the cost of living; the protection of lives and property from the assaults of organized destructionists and no less, the protection of the so-called 'common people' from the strangulation of organized rapacity; the safe-guarding of the nation's natural assets, and all other fundamental conditions which affect our daily lives and stimulate or retard our native energies."¹²²

¹²¹ Sapulpa, Okla., Commercial Club: U. S. Chamber of Commerce Organization Service, June 1, 1920.

¹²² Trezevant, M. B., Nation's Business, Feb. 17, 1912, p. 2.

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CHAPTER III

STRUCTURAL DETAILS

Organization. When a chamber of commerce is organized, the first thing that is done is to provide a definition of its structure and operation. In doing so, there are two principles that should be observed:¹

1. The form of the organization should be as simple as possible.
2. Control by its membership should be insured.

These principles are contained in the constitution and by-laws. Very often the constitution is omitted and in place of it there may be the articles of incorporation, the articles of association, or its provisions may be included in the by-laws. There seems to be no uniformity in practice on this point among the chambers of the country. Where both the constitution and the by-laws are used, however, the former provides for the establishment of the organization, while the latter provide for its operation. In such an event, the constitution should contain the name and location of the chamber, its purposes and ideals, together with a brief statement of its government and powers.

Because of the great lack of standardization of methods of operation among commercial bodies, a Committee on Standardization of Commercial Organizations was appointed in 1912 by the American Association of Commercial Executives for the purpose of formulating a model set of by-laws that should be adaptable to chambers of commerce in communities of 10,000 to 100,000 population.²

¹ Building and Maintaining a Local Chamber of Commerce: Organization Service of the Chamber of Commerce of the U. S., p. 5.

² Sturges, Kenneth, American Chambers of Commerce, Chap. 5.

After a careful study of the field, the committee presented its report two years later, and in addition to the model by-laws, there was included a set of "Ten Structural Principles," designed for the purpose of providing a guide for the development of the actual by-laws themselves. These principles are as follow:³

TEN STRUCTURAL PRINCIPLES

1. Scope to be stated in terms sufficiently broad and general to be inclusive of every activity to be undertaken by the organization.
2. Qualifications for membership should be stated with sufficient breadth to include all eligible persons; but provision should be made for reasonable care in the admission of members, as to their character, financial responsibility and sympathy with the general objects of the organization; provision for the suspension or dismissal of a member for cause.
3. Provision for the holding of meetings of the entire organization at intervals; and provision for the right of the membership to enforce a demand for a special meeting; and provision to prevent the precipitation without notice of a subject and action thereon at any meeting of the membership.
4. Provision for securing at regular intervals sufficient income to enable the organization to accomplish the work it undertakes; provision for a method of expenditure of funds; and provision for a competent audit at stated intervals of the finances of the organization.
5. Provision that the source of nomination for governing group of the organization shall be the membership at large; and provision for the exercise of a choice by the membership in the election of nominees to the governing body.
6. Provision that the governing group shall have ample power and certain jurisdiction; but provision for a reversal of the action of this group in a regular manner by the organization itself; and provision that at regular stated intervals the governing group shall be required to present a report to the membership.
7. Provision that the governing group shall elect the officers of the organization.

³U. S. Chamber of Commerce, Organization Service, loc. cit., p. 30.

8. Provision that committees shall be named by the President, subject to the confirmation of the governing group; and provision that every action of every committee shall be subject to review by the governing group before becoming the action of the organization; but provision that general policies and their interpretation having been fixed by the governing group, there may be reasonable freedom of action in specific cases in a particular line of activity by a group of members interested in that line--either through the creation of a subsidiary organization (such as a board or a department) or by committee.
9. Provision that the executive officer of the organization shall be elected by the governing group, and that he shall have the power of appointing and discharging all other employees; but provision that salaries shall be fixed by the governing group; or by a committee to whom the governing group may delegate that power.
10. Provision for the amendment of the by-laws by a method that is neither too easy nor too hard.

For the purpose of this inquiry a typical chamber of commerce of the most recent development has been selected to form the basis of illustration of organization.⁴ In this case a constitution is used in connection with the by-laws, and it contains the statement of the name, purpose, and government of the chamber. The by-laws contain seven articles, each article being sub-divided into as many sections as are necessary to explain it fully. These articles are:

1. Membership.
2. Dues.
3. Board of Directors and Officers.
4. Meetings and Elections.
5. Bureaus.
6. Committees.
7. Amendments.

Any individual, firm, or corporation, interested in the general welfare of the community, is eligible to membership. This statement of qualifications is practically universal among chambers of commerce. It is provided, however, that to become a member one must first make a written application to the board of directors (in some cases to the

⁴ Greeley, Colo., Chamber of Commerce: Constitution and By-Laws.

membership committee⁵) who must in turn act favorably upon the application before the membership can be issued. There is also a further provision made for honorary memberships and for the suspension or expulsion of members for cause.

The subject of dues for membership is one of the most important in the whole matter of organization. It goes without saying that a chamber of commerce must have ample funds to meet the requirements of its work. While the chamber may have other sources of revenue, the bulk of its income must be derived from its membership. Just how this membership may be secured is a problem of administration which will be discussed in the next section of this chapter; the purpose must first be to determine upon the dues rate.

Here again there is a great variation in the practices of the chambers throughout the country. Some chambers have preferred a very low rate in order to increase the membership roll, and when the revenue realized in this manner has not been ample, the balance has been cared for by popular donation. There is no question but what this method is unsound so far as the best interests of the organization are concerned. The tendency has always been to fix the rate of dues too low because, although this may lead to a large membership list, such a list is usually quite temporary, and it is continuous membership from year to year that counts.

Another method often employed is to have various classifications of members with dues fixed according to class. For example, Class A may be managers and proprietors of business firms, \$10 per year; Class B, employees, teachers, and other citizens not in Class A, \$5

⁵Denver, Colo., Denver Civic and Commercial Association, Year Book, 1919, p. 32.

per year; Class C, farmers and other non-residents, \$5 per year.⁶ Even with such a classification the tendency is to realize an inadequate income and to face a high percentage of loss of memberships each year on account of delinquents.

Because of these variations and classifications, most of them unsatisfactory, there has been a gradual movement toward higher membership dues on a flat rate basis. This movement has been stimulated by the support it has received from such sources as the American City Bureau and the organization service of the Chamber of Commerce of the United States. In a recent report of the latter, the following statement is made in this connection:⁷

"Among chambers of commerce having a flat rate, the prevailing rate of annual dues is \$25.00. Noteworthy in this connection is the fact that, with few exceptions, the organizations which, during the last two years have raised their rates have not only increased their revenue, but have had no permanent falling off in the number of their memberships. The probable reason for this is that public support will be given to an organization which is adequately financed, and withheld from one that is not."

In considering the board of directors of a chamber of commerce, the following general principles may be observed: (1) The number of members of the board is determined entirely by the size of the community which the chamber serves and the number of specific kinds of activities it desires to undertake.⁸ (2) Each director, except the President, is a department, division, or committee head, depending upon the character of the organization itself. (3) The board is elected from the membership of the chamber and is so organized as to be a self-perpetuating body; that is to say, each director is elected

⁶ Greeley, Colo., Chamber of Commerce.

⁷ U. S. Chamber of Commerce: Organization Service, loc. cit., p. 4. ⁸ Fifteen members have been found to be the most satisfactory number in communities of 5,000 to 25,000 population, and even in larger cities.

to serve three years, one third of the board retiring annually.

(4) The officers of the chamber, except the secretary, are elected from the membership of the board by the board itself. (5) The board of directors has general supervision over all business transactions of the chamber, but a right of reversal of action is reserved by the membership. (6) The directors meet at stated intervals, the frequency of which depending upon the size of the community. In very small organizations monthly meetings suffice, while in larger cities weekly meetings are required.

The officers of the average chamber are usually a president, one or more vice presidents, a treasurer, a secretary, and very often a counsel. The multiple system of vice presidents is used where the organization includes several bureaus or divisions requiring organic representation upon the board of directors.

There is another phase of organization that is often used in the larger bodies, namely that of a members' council or board of control. In some chambers this body is simply a large representative group of the membership elected at large to function as the initiative and referendum branch of the organization.⁹ In other places it is the deliberative body which controls, to a great extent, the policies and activities of the chamber.¹⁰ It is seldom employed, however, except where the whole membership is too large and too unwieldy to function in the capacity of the general deliberative body.

General membership meetings at regular intervals, usually monthly in smaller communities, and weekly in the larger places, occupy an important place in the general scheme of the activities of the chamber. By this method the membership is kept in touch with the

⁹Colorado Springs, Colo., Chamber of Commerce.

¹⁰Denver, Colo., Denver Civic and Commercial Association.

affairs of the organization, and it affords an opportunity for the discussion of special matters of public interest, locally and otherwise, as well as of a place of entertainment for notable visitors from the outside. So important has this phase of the work become that in some places programs are prepared several months in advance in order that these meetings may not be passed by.

The matter of the conduct of elections in chambers of commerce varies to some extent. The custom has been to hold an annual meeting, usually a dinner, at which time annual reports of various committees would be read and a new board of directors elected by acclamation. The invariable result has been anything but satisfactory. In the first place only a fraction of the total membership of the organization would be present at the meeting. In the next place such action as was taken was usually hasty, due to the late hour, other engagements, or something else. To do away with these difficulties, elections by mail are finding great favor throughout the country. Where this method is used, a nominating committee is appointed by the president fifteen days before the date of the annual meeting. It is the duty of this committee to select from the membership three times the number of names as there are outgoing directors, and to place these in nomination upon printed ballots which are then mailed to the regular qualified voting members of the chamber not later than ten days before the annual meeting. The polls are kept open until a specified hour upon the day of the annual meeting, at which time the returned ballots that have been voted are counted by a duly appointed canvassing committee. Those receiving the highest number of votes up to a third of the list, are declared elected, announcement of which is made at the general meeting, usually in the evening. By this plan

every member has an opportunity to cast his vote on the basis of a secret ballot. It saves time and secures the voice of the greatest number of the members of the chamber, many of whom would otherwise not vote.

An important feature of the organization of a chamber of commerce is the use that is made in many places of what is known as the bureau system. A bureau is a division of the membership of the chamber composed of individuals associated in similar lines of activity--commercially, industrially, professionally, or otherwise. The particular function of such a bureau is to promote the special interests of the group of which it is constituted. Its government is vested in a board of control of a specified number of its members, one of whom is a member of the board of directors of the chamber, either as one of its several vice presidents or simply as a regular director. This member is elected by the bureau and not by the chamber membership at large, so that this body has an official representation upon the governing board of the chamber, and in this way has an organic relation in the conduct of the affairs of the entire organization.

In addition to the board of control, each bureau has its own set of executive officers: president, vice president and secretary. These officers, together with the board of control, determine the policies and programs of work of each bureau, and the affairs of the bureau are left entirely in their hands as long as they do not conflict with the objects, purposes, or general ideals of the chamber. Wherever a community is large enough to warrant a division of the membership into bureaus, such a plan has been found very beneficial in the work of the chamber.

There remains one other part of chamber of commerce organization to be considered, namely that of its committee service. The committees of a chamber of commerce are the agencies through which its members serve the community, and by means of which the organization itself is able to perform the greater part of its work. Two general policies of committee work are followed in the most efficient organizations today. The first of these is to appoint a number of standing committees as provided in the by-laws to care for the work that is deemed continuous and recurring in the community. Sometimes the list of such committees is fairly large, and at other times it is small, depending in a large measure upon the whole plan of organization of the chamber. Very often the number of committees is identical with the number of members of the board of directors, not counting the president, as alluded to above, in which case each director is a committee chairman appointed to his position by the president, who, in turn, selects his own committee personnel from the general membership of the chamber. Such standing committees usually include the following: Finance, Membership, House and Entertainment, Advertising and Publicity, and Legislation. In addition to these, the president may appoint such other special committees from time to time as are necessary to carry out the functions of the chamber in all its ramifications.

The other policy is to name no standing committees whatever.¹¹ Where this plan is used it is considered better to appoint only such committees as have clearly defined duties to perform, and then to discharge the committees when their work is finished. This makes it possible to have a widely varying group of the chamber membership at

¹¹Fresno, Calif., Fresno County Chamber of Commerce, Report for 1919, p. 4.

work upon different projects at the same time, and it also gives an opportunity to select committee memberships from individuals especially qualified for particular tasks.

Under the first plan the danger is to create a lot of standing committees that just "stand," while under the second plan a great deal of looseness in the organization is often the result. It seems that the solution of the problem is a sensible combination of both plans, because the committee service of a chamber is the propelling force that gets things done in the community.

Administration. Briefly stated, the administrative machinery of a chamber of commerce, to be most efficient, should be simple and flexible, and provide for an active and continuous control of the organization by its members. It does not follow, however, that the administration of existing chambers meet these specifications, although the tendencies are in that direction. In the past it has often been the practice of commercial organization to display pretentious and extensive diagrams of bureau, departmental and committee organization, when as a matter of practice a great deal of this diagrammatic representation never got any farther than the paper upon which it was drawn. The trouble has been that too elaborate plans have been made before the real human elements of the organization in the form of members were received. It has been found more practical to start with a very modest beginning and then gradually grow to the larger type.

However, even in the smallest chamber that has perhaps a membership of not more than fifty and an income of \$250 a year altogether, it is possible to analyze the administrative functions into its com-

ponent parts. And may it be said in passing that anyone interested in the great part that the chambers of commerce are playing in the social and commercial welfare of the nation, who neglects the little organizations in the out-of-way places, many times off the railroad, is missing and neglecting centers and communities wherein assistance and inspiration are most needed and most appreciated. It is comparatively easy for a great organization with its three, four, and five thousand members, with its hundreds of thousands of dollars income, and with its high salaried secretary and efficient staff and equipment to arouse community spirit and direct community development, but it is an entirely different matter for a small group of citizens, fifty or sixty in number paying dues to the extent of twenty-five cents a month, with no paid secretary, no office, no equipment, not even a typewriter, situated in some little mountain village or dry land town, to have its organization and administration, and to carry out and solve its community problems, which are often, relatively speaking, of as great importance, if not greater, than the problems of the city with its hundreds of thousands or millions of population. Some conception of the importance of the idea attempted to be conveyed by this statement may be gathered from the fact that of the eighty odd active chambers of commerce in one of our states at the close of June, 1920, only three were in cities above 15,000 population, only seven were in cities of 10,000 population or over, and more than seventy-five per cent of them were in communities of 4,500 population or less.¹²

Whatever the size of the organization, its ultimate control must be vested in the entire membership. This is accomplished by means of

¹²Colorado: University Extension Studies by the author.

referenda and general membership meetings, and by the fact that the governing body, the board of directors, is a representative group elected by and from the membership itself. Because of the many and varied duties and details that present themselves and require attention from the chamber of commerce, this limited body called the board of directors has been found to be the most expedient means of caring for the work, and even here there is further delegation of responsibilities to the officers and committee chairmen.

It must always be borne in mind that while the organization of a chamber of commerce is practically identical with that of a going business corporation, that its administration is somewhat different. With all its directors, officers, and committee men, all of the services rendered to the community are free and without pay on the part of everyone connected with the organization except the secretary and the office staff, and very often even the secretary receives no compensation for his work, and which is more, he often furnishes out of his own pocket the cost of the stationery and stamps that may be required to properly carry on the activities of the chamber of which he is an officer.

The work of the board of directors is carried on through the committees referred to in the last section. As the board is called together for its stated meetings, matters requiring special attention are brought up, usually by the secretary, but often by other members of the board or the chamber. These matters are acted upon by the board as a whole or referred to the proper committees already appointed as standing committees, or to special committees created on the spot for the purpose. Committee work is measured by the reports that the committee chairmen are required to make either at regular

intervals or upon call by the president or the board.

Of the committees of a chamber, there are four that are worth while studying somewhat in detail. The first of these is the finance committee, of which the treasurer, in most cases, is the chairman. This committee has complete supervision of the finances of the chamber, receiving all moneys collected, and disbursing the funds only upon warrants properly drawn upon the treasurer by the secretary and countersigned by the president. The chairman of this committee is usually required to present to the board of directors a detailed monthly financial statement by means of which it is always possible to keep the closest record of the financial condition of the organization.

Since the chief source of revenue are the dues paid by the members of the chamber, the matter of securing and maintaining an adequate membership is of the utmost importance. And because it is so vital, this subject has been given more careful study by chamber of commerce workers than any other item of administration in the entire field.

In the first place, the work of securing the membership is usually assigned to a membership committee, the chairman of which is a member of the board of directors. This chairman usually serves for one year and his committee becomes one of the standing committees, organized and operating, however, on a somewhat different basis than the ordinary committees. After long experience with varying degrees of success, chambers of commerce have practically agreed upon the "continuous solicitation" plan as being the most feasible as well as the best result-getting method of securing members. This plan was first worked out in its present efficient form by A. W. Henderson in

1912, then secretary of the Chamber of Commerce of Colorado Springs, Colorado.¹³ Instead of appointing a committee to serve an entire year, only the chairman appointed by the president from the board membership serves that length of time. He in turn appoints a vice-chairman who serves for the same period. The rest of the personnel of the committee is changed every month with the understanding that this one month's service relieves every member who serves, from further work on that committee for the year. Five members ordinarily constitute the committee each month, and in this way it is possible to have sixty different members of the organization conduct a continuous membership campaign throughout the year.

To facilitate the work of the membership committee, a permanent index system of prospects is maintained and regularly revised. The committee meets early in the month and selects from the prospect file such names as seem most likely to join. Solicitations are further assisted by means of frequent invitations sent out to prospects by the chamber, inviting them to banquets and chamber meetings; in some places this is supplemented by letters sent out to prospects over the signatures of the president, the secretary, and one of the vice presidents, in which the purposes and ideals, the immediate program of work, and a special invitation to join the chamber are included.¹⁴

In some places each fiscal year is begun with an intensive membership drive, carried on either by local effort or by so-called experts from the outside. The last few years have seen the development of several such agencies. Sometimes they are one-man affairs

¹³ Mr. Henderson was a victim of the influenza epidemic in 1919, and by his untimely death at the age of thirty-one, not only Colorado but the whole country lost one of its ablest Chamber of Commerce secretaries.

¹⁴ Springfield, Mass., Chamber of Commerce.

where a single individual comes into a community and arouses interest by means of a series of lectures. Sometimes these drives are engineered by large concerns more or less elaborately equipped for the work. These methods have all contributed something to the expansion of the movement, but often the fees charged for the services rendered are too heavy to be borne by communities that need them most. These fees are usually based upon a per cent of membership dues subscribed over a three-year period and often amount to several thousand dollars for conducting a single campaign.¹⁵

Rather than having such a large amount of money go out of the community for this purpose, some chambers stage their own campaigns with remarkable results. One chamber of commerce in a city of 23,000 population locally organized and conducted its own campaign with the result that its membership grew from 600 to 1,200, and its annual income for 1919 totaling \$19,000.¹⁶ Whatever the method is that is used, its real purpose is to "sell" the community to its own citizens. This can only be done by the organized effort of men who have the vision that "the most potent constructive influence in a community is a body of business and professional men, banded unselfishly together for the purpose of improving its citizenship: to carry aloft those ideals of a greater and progressive community."¹⁷

Another committee that functions largely in matters of administration is that of the house and entertainment committee. One of its chief functions is that of providing adequate headquarters and equipment. Such headquarters range all the way from desk room in

¹⁵Fresno, Calif., Fresno County Chamber of Commerce: Financial Statement, Dec. 31, 1919.

¹⁶Middletown, Ohio, Chamber of Commerce.

¹⁷Brunswick, N. J., Board of Trade: Retail Merchants' Division, "Achievement," 1919.

dingy real estate offices to pretentious and magnificent chamber of commerce building. Except for the large cities, anything beyond one room or a suite of rooms is out of the reach of the average chamber. Much of the success of the work of the organization lies in the housing of its office, and for the average small city a first floor location is much more desirable than one that is upstairs. The same principle applies here as in the merchandising world. It is not until a city has attained a certain size that it is profitable to add upper floors to retail establishments. The larger the city the higher the retail stores may be with profit. Because the headquarters of the Chamber of Commerce of Omaha occupy the seventeenth and eighteenth floors of a sky-scraper, it does not follow that the Chamber of Commerce of Loveland, Colorado, would be relatively as successful on the second floor of a store building in that small western city. In fact the opposite is true. The element of availability and easy access is very important to stimulate close contact between the organization itself and its members. The best first floor location with an attractive entrance is none too good for the small town chamber.

Many chambers of commerce have made the serious mistake in the past of including club features in their headquarters, and for some organizations this thing alone has been responsible for their failures and low standing in the community. The reason for this is plain. To many of its members the chamber of commerce becomes simply a loafing place, which in some instances, have degenerated into gambling dens. Whether the latter happens or not, a social club is anything but that for which a chamber of commerce is organized. When it becomes such a club, it at once takes on the aspect of exclusiveness so that many persons feel that they are paying dues for the principal

purpose of maintaining pool and billiard tables and card rooms for a special few, and they respectfully resign from the organization.

A chamber of commerce is essentially an institution established for the one purpose of community building in all its phases, and its housing and equipment should be determined upon with that end in view. Committee rooms, reading rooms well stocked with newspapers, magazines and a business library are quite essential for this purpose. Likewise rest rooms, information bureaus, free telephone service, and cafeterias are adjuncts that may well find places in all chambers of commerce where their size and finances will warrant. But they are all means to the same end, namely that of fostering the most efficient service of the chamber of commerce to all the people of the community.

The house and entertainment committee is also responsible for all public meetings held by the chamber. It is through this committee that speakers are secured and that special attractions are provided. Where these duties are many the two functions are often separated and assigned to different committees.

Since publicity is one of the essential activities of every chamber of commerce, and since it is one that requires a large appropriation, it is important that its administration is handled by a responsible committee whose chairman is a member of the board of directors. The publicity of a chamber includes not only descriptive matter of the community, but it also includes special reports and bulletins, annual and otherwise, as well as the official organ published regularly where such a publication is maintained. The editor and business manager, in this case, are responsible to the publicity committee. Very often there is also a close relationship maintained

between the publicity committee and the committee on conventions and fairs for the reason that the activities of the latter could not be properly carried on without adequate advertising.

What has been said in the foregoing regarding the administration of the work of a chamber with respect to the committees described applies with equal force to all other communities, standing and special. The important thing to observe is that a chamber of commerce cannot function efficiently except through its committee service. The organizations that are most nearly performing the tasks of community development for which they were established are the ones that have complete committees, large enough and ample to cover the field, and who, at the same time, discharge the duties assigned to them in a spirit of "one for all and all for one."¹⁸

The administrative functions of the officers of a chamber of commerce are comparatively limited. The president, while the presiding officer in fact, delegates most of the work to others, as has been observed above. This is necessary to good government because the chamber of commerce that takes on the aspect of a one-man organization soon loses its standing and influence in the community. The same applies to the secretary of the chamber. As will be shown in the next section, the secretary must be a leader of community-wide work, but aside from that, his administrative functions also apply to his immediate office.

Many a man's executive ability may be very accurately judged by the way he keeps his own desk. A man whose desk presents a mass of miscellaneous papers, letters, books and equipment in all stages of disarrangement is as a rule just as poor a manager of people as he is

¹⁸Denver, Colo., Slogan of the Denver Civic and Commercial Association.

of his personal affairs. The man who insists on a roll top desk that offers a particular temptation to hide a litter of disorganized and unfinished work, may usually be depended upon to carry on his work beyond his office routine in a like manner. All of which leads to the further fact that the secretary who sits behind a flat top desk free from incumbrances of unanswered inquiries, unopened mail and incomplete reports is the one whose example alone reaches beyond the doors of his headquarters to the business offices of his community.

There is one other part of the secretary's duties in an administrative capacity that deserves attention, namely that of the construction of a program of work and a statement of accomplishments. It is only within recent years that the necessity for definite programs of work has been recognized by the secretaries of the country, and there are many chambers who are still groping along in the dark, haphazard in their work because of their neglect or inability to work out definite programs that should be followed as guides in the year's activities.

The preparation of a program of work requires the most careful consideration since it is the chief argument for membership support. It need not be long, but it should contain a list of such projects as the community would indorse, and that is, in substance, a fair representation of the best thinking that the entire membership can offer, so far as the needs of the community are concerned. When such a program is made up it is usually done by submitting to each member for careful answer two questions similar to the following:

- (a) What do you expect the organization to do for the promotion of your own line of business or activity?
- (b) What, in your opinion as a citizen, is the thing of first importance to be done for the community as a whole?

¹⁹ Wilson, Lucius E., *Building Cities for Tomorrow*, p. 17.

It is interesting to notice what the results of such a questionnaire are. In one community the answers to the first question were practically unanimous that what would benefit the community as a whole would at the same time benefit the individuals in it, and hence no specific data ~~were~~ received as a response to it. But with respect to the second question the case was different. Here was something that could be pointed out specifically, and the answers received constituted a clear index as to the civic needs of that particular city.²⁰ While there were forty-six different groups of answers received, fifteen per cent of them were agreed that street paving was of first importance; ten per cent that good roads in the county demanded immediate attention; seven per cent that the sewer system should be improved; and six per cent that a municipal auditorium should be erected. Here, then, was a very definite beginning for the formulation of a program of work for the chamber.

This is only one way in which to develop a program of work. In another city²¹ the mayor set aside one week during which each citizen was called upon to give thought to the needs of the community and be prepared to give constructive suggestions to the program committee of the chamber of commerce. The week culminated in a town meeting at which citizens offered their suggestions to the program committee. In another place a referendum was used by means of which the following program of work was arranged:²²

- Plank 1, City Beautification.
- " 3, Town Plan.
- " 3, Housing.
- " 4, Community Building.
- " 5, River and Railroad Crossing.
- " 6, Grade Crossing Elimination.

²⁰Greeley, Colo., Chamber of Commerce, 1920.

²¹Piqua, Ohio, Chamber of Commerce, 1920.

²²Webster-Dudley, Mass., Chamber of Commerce.

- Plank 7, Lake Improvement.
- " 8, Retail Trade.
- " 9, Good Roads.
- " 10, Recreation.
- " 11, Town Manager.

It is evident that by this plan the secretary may be able to exercise an effective control over the committee service of the chamber. Not only that, but a trial balance, so to speak, of what the chamber of commerce is actually doing may be easily made. Some years ago an organization in a middle western city constructed such a device. The planks of the current platform were printed as debit items in one column on a page, and the work of the committees were placed in a parallel column as credit items. The checking up was done at regular intervals and the weak spots in the committee work were made painfully apparent. The record of that unique organization proved to be very valuable.²³

The Secretary. As transformation has taken place in the functions and purpose of the chamber of commerce, a transformation from a program that frankly and avowedly existed to serve the interests of a small group, to a program which proposes service to every interest in the whole community, so has there also come about a transformation in the duties and opportunities of the chamber of commerce secretary. While this individual still bears the old title, his position is something far different from secretarial in the ordinary acceptance of the term. He has come to be a real executive--a manager of an organization so constituted that he can make it or break it.

Hence there has been created a new profession in this country, peculiarly attractive and of limitless possibilities. It is that of

²³Des Moines, Ia., Greater Des Moines Committee. See Wilson, L. E., op. cit., pp. 18-19.

the commercial organization secretary. True, there have been secretaries as long as there have been chambers of commerce, but the secretary's job originally was to "put over" a program, to produce results which would ever more rapidly pile dollars on top of dollars already possessed by his clientele. He was supposed to be a walking encyclopaedia who knew all about the number of acres under cultivation in the county, who could recite the minimum, maximum and mean temperatures of the region over a period of years at a moment's notice. He was a "booster", which meant that if the population of his city was 15,000, he invariably said 20,000; it meant that he was primarily supposed to be a "factory grabber", whether such a factory fit the community or not. He had no particular administrative duties, and most of his time was confined to a dingy office or an ill-kept club room, there to be the "secretary" of a small group of "progressive citizens", bent on making use of the organization for their personal profit.

The new secretary has a bigger mission to perform. He knows the needs of the community. He adapts scientific means to the improvement of the town. He is as precise and sure as his predecessor was haphazard and uncertain. To him mere motion is not attainment. He is too wise to depend solely upon his own imagination and experience, and too efficient not to avail himself of the experience of others. He must be the force behind the persistent, yet diplomatic attempt to dissipate the three great obstacles to civic progress: individual selfishness, lack of vision, and natural lethargy. The commercial secretary's problem is the monumental problem of human nature.

It has been said that the secretary who sees his profession aright will set his path parallel to that of the superintendent of

schools, the preacher, the university president--he will see in his own opportunity a combination of the opportunities of these three community teachers.²⁴ It is well that the secretary concern himself with the material development of his community, things which must be done by every chamber of commerce, but the secretary who really lives up to and is worthy of the high calling of leadership in community building is he whose service to that community has created a higher conception of the individual's responsibility to the group.

For all this the chamber of commerce secretary is paid tremendously in satisfaction and fairly well in money. The salaries range from as low as \$1,500 a year to \$12,000 a year. The greatest number of secretaries are in the \$2,400 to \$3,600 class.²⁵ Naturally there are many part-time secretaries in small communities who receive no salary whatever, or at best, merely a small stipend in recognition of the hours they must give to correspondence and other details incidental to their office. But more and more communities are swinging into the full time secretary group, realizing that much time and money have been wasted, that many bright hopes have been disappointed, that many ambitious community schemes have been blasted because of the lack of adequate leadership in the important position of chamber of commerce secretary.

Because of his position in the community, the secretary must be a man of high character if his work is to succeed. As the salesman is the house to the customer, so is the secretary the chamber to the community. His work is idealistic from the beginning, which makes high ideals of life the first requisite of character for the secre-

²⁴Community Leadership bulletin, Mar. 11, 1920, p. 1.

²⁵Wilson, Lucius E., Community Leadership, p. 3.

tary. Not only is a man "as he thinketh", but he does so, as well. The secretary must have definite convictions of what is right and wrong, good and evil in his community, and by the courage of these convictions back up intelligent programs of civic betterment in which such convictions may be involved.

He must, therefore, cultivate courage and vision. He must be bigger than his job. It would be profitless to know much and dare little. But courage and vision do not come by inheritance nor yet by accident; they are the result of training and the acquiring of familiarity with the job and its possibilities. This, in turn, requires the cultivation of social judgment. When a board of directors engages a man as secretary of a chamber of commerce, they do so for the purpose of securing a man to help them work out certain community-wide problems. They do not hire a man to be a servant, nor yet a dictator. Servility is not helpful; neither is boastfulness. It is the spirit of mutual helpfulness that spells success in public positions of this kind.

The question has often arisen as to the relation between secretarial efficiency and educational training. In many quarters the prevalent opinion has been that experience is the only teacher for this kind of work. Some have even gone so far as to say that the failure of many organizations may be attributed to the lack of secretaries trained in the school of experience. "It takes more than theories and bales of statistics to do things and get things in these days of keen competition", a certain commercial organization executive writes.²⁶

²⁶Report of the Second Annual Meeting of the National Association of Commercial Organization Secretaries, 1916, p. 95.

In sharp contrast to the above opinion, another no less important executive says that "the man who has had collegiate training has his mind tuned to the work before he starts, and he finds fewer bitter experiences in his work than does the man who has to wait for the hard knocks of experience to jar loose his hoodwink."²⁷ As great a practical man as Frank A. Vanderlip says, "The practical school of experience is too wasteful as a teacher of general principles,"²⁸ and the modern chamber of commerce secretary, by the very nature of his profession, in order to fulfill in an acceptable measure the functions assigned to him, must possess a grasp of the principles that govern economic and civic activities of the community as well as the nation, and which only a college training can best provide in the briefest possible time.

A few years ago, in 1916, a careful study of this phase of secretarial work was made by Mr. George E. Foss, secretary of the Board of Trade of Springfield, Mass. By means of answers to questionnaires received from 143 leading commercial organizations of the country, Mr. Foss has been able to show some interesting facts and to draw certain significant conclusions.²⁹ In the first place, of 140 complete replies received, twenty men did not enter high school, fifty had some high school training, fifty-five had from one to four years in college, and fifteen had post graduate work. By means of grouping the replies with respect to comparative importance of positions, the study revealed that three college men were in the most desirable and influential positions to every two men whose education had not included some part of a college course. It further showed

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid., p. 96.

²⁹ Ibid., p. 90 ff.

that seventy secretaries out of one hundred and forty, or exactly fifty per cent, had some college training.

The grouping referred to in the preceding paragraph was based on a classification determined by the size of the organization, the budget, and the number of employees on the organization staff. Group one, therefore, contained the replies of the twenty-five secretaries holding the largest executive positions. Group two, the twenty-five holding the next largest positions, and so on through the list, with only eighteen names in the last group--number six.

In group one, the highest, it was found that:

8.5% did not enter high school,
12.5% graduated from high school only,
42.5% graduated from college, and
29.75% did graduate work after receiving their college degrees.

The per cent of college graduates was more than twice as great as the percentage of graduates of high school and grammar school combined.

Another significant classification showed how the percentage of college graduates decreased in the succeeding groups based upon relative importance:

Group I	had 42.50%	of college graduates
Group II	had 33.33%	of college graduates
Group III	had 25.00%	of college graduates
Group IV	had 28.00%	of college graduates
Group V	had 20.00%	of college graduates
Group VI	had 16.00%	of college graduates

These figures would indicate that college men as secretaries of chambers of commerce are finding their places in the larger executive positions.

In concluding this interesting study, Mr. Foss observes that the men in each of the groups had practically the same amount of experience before reaching the positions held at the time of the investi-

gation. The length of a man's experience is not the determining factor in a secretary's success. There may be a few exceptions to this rule, but in the main, education plus experience is the combination which brings a man into the largest executive positions in commercial organization work, and education is the determining factor.

The question then naturally arises, which subjects for study should form the ground-work of a college course designed to prepare men for commercial organization secretarial work? Here again a survey of opinions expressed by successful men in the field, is a helpful criterion for anyone seriously to consider in this connection. To the question, "What subjects for courses of study do you consider essential and helpful to attain success in this field," the following number of answers were received:

<u>Subject</u>	<u>Essential</u>	<u>Helpful</u>
Economics	54	2
Civics	35	4
English	31	0
Public Speaking	23	6
Business Administration	26	1
Sociology	19	5
History	17	4
Commercial Law	17	3
Transportation	15	5
Accounting	15	4
Finance	17	2
Psychology	13	5
Advertising	13	3
Business Organization	15	1
Journalism	8	4
Mathematics	8	4
Law	7	4
Salesmanship	8	2

It will be observed that the above list is a combination of what may be termed general and specialized subjects. It may also be said that the latter courses are the ones which universities and colleges have been the most reluctant to introduce into their curricula, holding to the old theory that "a general training will fit a man for

anything." Men in business, and particularly men engaged as secretaries of chambers of commerce, know that such a theory is fallacious. It helps a man, but it does not "fit" him. These more practical courses are necessary in order that a training for this work may be adequate and complete.

In recent years, a change has been gradually taking place in the colleges and universities of the country, until at the present time it is possible for men seeking to train themselves for any calling in life, including that of commercial secretary, may find many institutions equipped and ready to supply their educational wants.

The completion of a course in college, however, should not end a secretary's education. In a field as broad, and yet containing so many ramifications as is that of the modern chamber of commerce, the secretary must be a persistent student. Self education is a process eminently fitting in this profession, both to the man devoid of college and university opportunities and to the man who has had such training. That is to say, in order for a man to be properly equipped for this exacting service, he must be familiar with the fundamental principles in government, in economics, in sociology, in law and in business. If such a familiarity has not been attained in the class room, then it must be secured through the medium of home study and reading. Not only that, but because of the rapidly changing conditions that obtain in modern society, the college trained man must also engage in personal study in order to keep abreast of the great movements that affect the whole group of society, and therefore, although in a small measure, perhaps, his own community.

The knowledge of facts without the ability to administer them, spells defeat for the secretary. It is obvious that a secretary must

be something besides an individual who runs his legs off and wears out his eyes to see that all the details of the chamber operate. A secretary should measure his success by the amount of work which his various committees are caused to perform, rather than by the number of definite tasks which he himself fulfills. To bring such a condition into being requires executive and managerial ability, both of which a successful secretary must have in abundance.

In order to function in such an administrative capacity, the secretary must command the respect of the board of directors and the entire membership of the chamber. He must know what he is talking about and be able to demonstrate the feasibility of his plans, either by being able to do them himself, or by pointing to instances where they have been successful. One with such ability does not ask foolish questions or make ridiculous suggestions. He must understand human nature, and be able to use his knowledge. He should be more interested in people than in a good filing system for the office or grabbing factories for an unwarranted location.

With these more or less general qualifications, there are a number of specific attributes which the chamber of commerce secretary should possess. There is no man in the community that is called upon to take part in more or a greater variety of meetings than the secretary of the local chamber of commerce if he is a real force as he ought to be. He is almost of necessity required to have considerable ability as a public speaker. One secretary has stated that one hundred public speeches in a year outside of office hours is a fair average to expect.³⁰ These speeches range from lectures to women's clubs to commencement addresses, sermons in churches, talks to farm-

³⁰Wilson, Lucius E., op. cit., p. 128.

ers, business lectures to merchants, after-dinner speeches, and many others.

The secretary is also called upon to do a large amount of publicity for his organization. This requires a certain training and experience in various forms of journalism. The secretary often finds it desirable to write his own news stories for the local papers, and very often he is asked to supply special articles on subjects of public interest. Magazines nation-wide in their circulation frequently seek feature stories from chambers of commerce, and it usually falls to the lot of the secretary to write them. These, together with the regular and special advertising activities of the chamber, gives the secretary a wholesome amount of writing to do which would be irksome were he not equipped to handle it.

Considering the secretary and his work, therefore, in all the phases of his contact with the community, it is seen that such leadership is closely akin to the teaching of adults in the class room. It is the function of the teacher to present the facts and to help the student to analyze a problem into all its parts, setting off against each other arguments and principles that seem to conflict. It is not the function of the teacher to insist on the student's agreement with his own views. The teacher's function is to raise the problem, not arbitrarily to solve it; to "think with the pupil, not for him." So it is also the function of the chamber of commerce secretary to help and to lead his community to study and to analyze community problems, and to stimulate the community to its own self-expression. He is the leader that assists in showing the way to the community as it builds.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

In the preparation of this thesis, it has been the purpose of the author to attempt to cover the field of work of the modern chamber of commerce in America and to illustrate by means of typical examples the various activities that link it to the life and interests of the public as we see it today. In no sense must this inquiry be construed to be a description of any one organization, nor can it, within reason, be supposed that there is any chamber anywhere that finds itself engaged in all of these activities at any given time. Local conditions and local problems vary with each different community, so that no two chambers of commerce find identical situations in which to operate. But if we can think of the whole movement as a unit and apply it to our modern society, we shall then be able to see how the chamber of commerce as it functions today vitally influences, and to a great degree directs community building throughout the country, rather than in any particular place.

The history of the movement has shown its development from European bodies of tradesmen organized for a limited purpose of trade and commerce. From the early groups operating directly under governmental jurisdiction and supervision, it has grown to be purely democratic in its nature and voluntary as to its membership. At first the chamber of commerce avowedly represented only those engaged in commerce and industry and its activities were restricted to those things that bore directly upon the interests of such occupations. Today, however, the chamber of commerce is a composite, not only of a

city's wealth, but of its intelligence. "The modern chamber of commerce is a new element in urban development, for in less than two decades it has come to be recognized as the active agency by means of which the city builds itself--moulds its character, shapes its physical qualities, and forms its social ideals. Prosperity has invariably followed the work of the efficient modern chamber of commerce; and it has secured good government and good public service in every city where it has been established."¹

The fact that the chamber of commerce has attained to this high position among civic organizations has not come about by accident. With the spirit of democracy in business has also come the spirit of cooperation. As Elbert Hubbard so truthfully and so beautifully put it, "In modern business we have health, intelligence, animation, beauty, truth. And he who can sanctify all these with love, so that cooperation shall reign where competition once was rife, shall be crowned with honor, and his name shall be called blessed."²

It was the working together of business men in this way that led James Bryce to observe that "the most constructive influence in a community is a body of business and professional men banded unselfishly together for the purpose of improving its citizenship." This is the essence of the chamber of commerce of today. Perhaps there is no better single illustration of this fact than that which obtains in the city of Cleveland. Cleveland was the first American city to establish a chamber of commerce on the broad basis of community service. The Cleveland chamber has demonstrated that united effort in a public cause breeds a progressive spirit, and infuses

¹Ritchie, R., The Modern Chamber of Commerce: National Municipal Review, April 1912, p. 161.

²Cosmopolitan, June 1913, p. 3.

new life and new enthusiasm into the whole community. "Eighteen years ago Cleveland saw that the making of the city was not the work of the individual--however useful that may be--but of an inclusive society of individuals. It discovered that merchants, manufacturers, bankers, lawyers or physicians would, acting separately as classes, accomplish little, since each class would naturally work for itself. So it united these classes and today the Cleveland Chamber of Commerce is the finest model of organized efficiency and influence in the country."³

In its scope, it has been shown that the chamber of commerce reaches from the village in the remote district localized in the highest degree, to city, county, state, and nation, and even to international affairs as well. But be it local or be it nation-wide, its essential purpose remains the same: "To give dynamic force to the demands of business and civic economy: this, I take it, is primarily the task of commercial organizations of the country in their move toward national development, but they must first grasp the meaning of national commercial and civic unity, and secondly, to intelligently apply that knowledge to a practical purpose."⁴ In these words is summed up the statement of the goal towards which the modern chamber is striving. There is the imparting of that impulse which tends toward higher ideals in the busy life of today, and with it there is also the purpose of intelligent action. It is with this in mind that a secretary of a local association has given us an expression of his conception of the work in which he is engaged:⁵

³ Ritchie, R., op. cit., p. 167.

⁴ Trezevant, M. B., Nation's Business, Feb. 17, 1913, p. 3.

⁵ Holmes, R. J., Decatur, Ill., Association of Commerce: Community Leadership, Mar. 11, 1920, p. 2.

"To build for ourselves and our posterity a city which shall be characterized by order, comfort, beauty and prosperity; a city whose ideals shall be good citizenship, unity, equality and progress; wherein every inhabitant shall find his fullest possible measure of opportunity, privilege, and happiness; where every citizen perceives his individual partnership and his personal share of responsibility, and seeks to pay his debt of obligation by ceaseless loyalty and readiness to render public service; in brief, to make Decatur the ideal American city, a city of comfortable, happy homes of prosperous, loyal and devoted citizens--this is the task assumed by the Association of Commerce."

Considering then, the relationship of the chamber of commerce to the material side of its community, the modern chamber serves its membership by seeing to it that the best interests of the business establishments are subserved. If the business methods of the community are antequated and musty, the process of restoration and renovation finds its source among the business men themselves through means provided by the chamber of commerce. Business today is more than barter, founded though it may be on buying and selling. The motto "caveat emptor" no longer finds a place in the ethics of the modern merchant; on the contrary, there is that new slogan, the rallying cry of America's highest type of men of affairs, "He profits most who serves best."⁶

In business so in industry and in commerce. While the chamber of commerce still relentlessly seeks industrial and commercial expansion for its community, its method of so doing differs widely from that so generally employed a decade or two ago. In place of bonuses and free sites to allure the factory and the railroad, today a scientific and carefully compiled statement of the natural and created advantages stripped of all exaggerations and useless superlatives, is held up as the deciding factor which shall determine the location

⁶Slogan of the Rotary Club.

of the mill or the extension of the railway. When a town or city has really something to offer in itself far more substantial to industrial prosperity than a free-will cash offering, it has then qualified in the first essential for industrial development.

While in the years of census taking some cities and towns are boasting and strutting about displaying huge percentages of increase in population, and while others are audibly quiet when no gain, or perchance a loss is shown in the official count, it is well to remember that these United States are not altogether urban. We are still, and as long as man must eat, shall always be dependent upon the farm and its products as our basic industry. Since 1850 the proportion of urban population to rural population has been increasing with every census, which in 1910, showed forty-two per cent of the people of this nation lived in cities of 8,000 population and over, and no doubt, when the final summary has been made for 1920, more than half of the inhabitants of the United States will be found to be city dwellers. In the same length of time, from 1850 to 1910, there has been no change whatever in the proportion of the number of farms to the total rural population, remaining constantly at one farm for every eight persons. Over against these facts we also find that the per cent of increase in number of farms has not kept up with the per cent of increase of population, and without going into further detail, it can be demonstrated that while one farm with eight people thereon fed $2 \frac{1}{14}$ extra city folks in 1850, in 1900 one farm and eight people sustained $4 \frac{1}{2}$ extra urban dwellers, and in 1910, one farm and eight people produced the food for $6 \frac{1}{9}$ extra consumers in the cities of the land.⁷ What it will be in 1920 one can only hazard

⁷U. S. Census Reports, Agricultural Statistics, 1910.

a guess till the figures are compiled, but it is probably safe to estimate that the ratio will be even much higher because the number of farms has not increased greatly during the last decade, the number of producers on the farms has not kept up with the increase of population in the cities, and there is every reason to guess that there is still no more than one farm for each eight persons of the rural population, all of which simply point to the necessity of the increase in production per acre on every farm in America, or the time will soon be at hand when this country will soon find itself dependent upon other nations for the necessities of life.

And so while cities and towns point with pride to their growth from decade to decade, and justly so, they must not lose sight of the fact that to be truly prosperous the agricultural sections must prosper as well. In the study of the relation of the chamber of commerce to agriculture and rural development, it was shown that recognition is being given in a large way to this problem; that through this organization, in many places, better farming methods, better equipment, improvement in living conditions, and many other things conducive to rural welfare are being introduced.

It was Lincoln who said, "I believe that a man should be proud of the city in which he lives: and that he should so live that his city should be proud he lives in it." Where such a desirable situation obtains, and the pride is displayed in action, the result is something more than material gain: there also comes what we commonly call civic spirit or civic pride manifested in civic improvement. Here again public opinion, for that is what civic pride amounts to, to find an outlet in accomplishments must be crystallized in some working body, such as is expressed by the chamber of commerce. By

means of leadership and suggestion the modern chamber is able to cooperate with the local municipal government in city planning, public health and sanitation, school improvement, the securing of proper recreational facilities, and charities and corrections such as no other organization can do. In speaking of social welfare of this kind, a prominent social worker has made an apt comparison. He says:⁸

"The tenement house district of New York and the great American desert that stretches up and down the continent are both deserts in many ways. I have seen the poor man and his wife go out to New Mexico and struggle on that soil to make a farm and to make a living, and it could not be done. Regardless of how hard the man tried he could not succeed unless the Government dammed up one of the rivers and built a big reservoir, or unless he was able to get a few thousand dollars together and sink an artesian well into the depths --hundreds, perhaps thousands of feet. Thus he might, by using skill, capital, brains and far-sightedness, touch the depths of water, that, rushing to the surface, would transform the desert. I have seen those desert farms grow into homes, and houses, and schoolhouses, and books, and blossom in the faces of our people.

"Now, the tenement house districts of a great city have to be transformed in the same way. The New Mexican desert had to transform itself. You can't bring water from any other place. I don't care how hard these men worked, they could not bring water enough in a bucket to make farms. And I don't care how hard we work, we social workers, we can't bring water in a bucket to irrigate and make over again the dreary part of our cities. That has to be done on a big scale, and the city desert, like the New Mexican desert, has to furnish its own reformation out of the people who live there, as from them alone can come the power that will change these dreary, human deserts. The settlement worker, the nurse, the doctor, the local reformer at present are running up and down the streets, as it were, trying to irrigate the desert with a bucket of water, and every one is getting in the other's way and upsetting the bucket. It seems to me that a good social organization sinks the well into the depths of people's lives and makes the dreary city district irrigate itself."

This expresses the thought forcibly and concretely, and points out the true relationship which should exist, and does exist in the most progressive communities between the chamber of commerce as the

⁸Elliott, John Lovejoy, National Social Unit Conference, Oct. 23, 1919, Report p. 4.

central organization, and the various other groups that often abound too profusely, but who are all striving for the same objective: the best there is for their city.

What, then, is the mechanical organization of such a body, and how does it operate? To be genuinely, effectively, and permanently successful, a chamber of commerce knows beyond possible doubt that it has--⁹

1. The means by which public sentiment may be developed for the undertaking of worth-while things.
2. Machinery by which it may determine when public sentiment is ripe for undertaking each specific thing.
3. The necessary knowledge of technique and administration with which to carry each specific undertaking to success.

The illustrations given in the body of this work have given ample evidence that a great proportion of the modern chambers of commerce can measure up to this standard, but in order to do so they have passed from the indefinite and uncertain stage to that where the leadership, at least, has become a profession as truly as any other calling to which men apply themselves. "We have learned that democratic community organization involving the organization of professional groups and trade groups and the whole citizenship is a very complicated thing. It cannot be carried on by people who do not believe in democracy and care about it. It must be carried on by people of clear vision and deep patriotism, and they must see very clearly what they wish to do and how they can do it. The education of such people in community organization must precede any effort to organize communities intelligently. Organizing a community is a very difficult

⁹The Problems of Peace and Your Community: American City Bureau, 1920, p. 4.

problem, and it cannot be carried on by amateurs."¹⁰

In what has been said it has not been the purpose to exaggerate; there have been failures among chambers of commerce--there are many failures every year. There are still a great many who do not nearly approach the ideal of community leadership. It cannot be supposed that any organization of the present day is functioning up to its maximum possibilities, but for this condition the reason is clear. As a modern philosopher puts it, "men fail to do as they ought for two reasons, first, they do not see their duty with sufficient clearness, and second, they do not feel their obligation to do it with sufficient force."¹¹ This is eminently true of the average citizen in his relation to his community.

But that there are grounds for encouragement in the hope of continued advancement there are evidences on every hand. One of America's greatest merchant's has said, "I look forward to great improvement in organization of business men locally, and the general adoption and enlargement of the principles that have made for the greatest success of the well organized chamber of commerce of our country, namely, that it is good business to concentrate the business interests in every city into one strong democratic organization, and thus concentrated they shall be foremost in helping forward the civic and social progress of their city and its citizens with the same degree of interest as they help its commercial and industrial progress."¹²

These are the qualities: unselfishness, intelligence, and cooperation, that are causing our chambers of commerce to be the great influences for advancement of business, industry, and American com-

¹⁰Phillips, Wilbur C., *The Social Unit in 1920*, pp. 5-6.

¹¹Sidgwick, Henry, *Practical Ethics*, p. 83.

¹²Filene, Edward A., Boston, before the American Chamber of Commerce of Paris: *Nation's Business*, Sept. 5, 1913, p. 1.

munities themselves. When a western chamber of commerce recently presented its "war president" with a set of engrossed resolutions, thanking him for his untiring efforts during the period of the great war--a man who had seen fit to give up his entire legal practice to serve the interests of the chamber of commerce in that critical time, he said, "I consider the slight service I have rendered the Chamber of Commerce as a small installment on the debt I owe the state as a citizen."¹³ Here was a man who had caught the meaning of Theodore Roosevelt's pertinent remark, "The test of a man's worth to his community is the service he renders to it." This is the stuff that makes a sound foundation for American democracy, finding, as it does, its expression through the modern chamber of commerce.

There is much to be heard on every hand in these days of after-the-war about social, economic, and political reconstruction. And yet if this reconstruction is to come about at all it must reach back to those same individuals who are striving diligently for their own community betterment, be it social, economic, or political. Professor Davenport of Hamilton College has summarized this thought in the following words:¹⁴

"The chief task of political democracy at the present hour, at home or abroad, is to reconcile gain with right conduct and service. In domestic politics in America the most difficult problem is the reconciliation of the points of view and the practices of capital and labor with public welfare; in international politics it is the subjection of territorial and commercial aggression to the welfare of mankind; among the weaker nations of Europe, by the great war now set free, it is the reconciliation of peasant and landlord as well as of capitalist and laborer. The fate of democracy is wrapped up in the reconciliation of the economic motive with the ethical motive throughout the world."

It is the problem of democracy as exemplified by the chamber of com-

¹³ Los Angeles, Calif., Chamber of Commerce: Members' Annual, 1920, p. 58.

¹⁴ Wilson, Lucius E., *Building Cities for Tomorrow*, p. 32.

merce in local affairs, applied in a much larger way to national and international relations.

Where, then, has this inquiry finally taken us? In brief, it has shown that the ideal is the goal, whether attainable or not; that the city without ideals is as a saw without steel; that the underlying purpose of all this effort, this organization, the expenditure of sums of money and hours of time, is the quest of the "ideal city," much of the blessing of which lies in the seeking thereof. As the chamber of commerce, therefore, applies itself to community building, it may well say with John Ruskin: "Therefore when we build, let us think we build forever. Let it not be for present delight, nor for present use alone. Let it be such work as our descendants will thank us for, and let us think as we lay stone on stone, that a time is to come when those stones will be held sacred because our hands have touched them and that men will say as they look upon the labor, and wrought substance of them, 'See this our fathers did for us.'"

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AN IDEAL CITY

A city, sanitary, convenient, substantial;
Where the houses of the rich and poor are alike--comfortable and beautiful;
Where the streets are clean and the sky line is clear as country air;
Where the architectural excellence of its buildings add beauty and dignity to its streets;
Where parks and playgrounds are within reach of every child;
Where living is pleasant, toil honorable, and recreation plentiful;
Where capital is respected, but not worshipped;
Where commerce in goods is great, but no greater than the interchange of ideas;
Where industry thrives and brings prosperity alike to employer and employee;
Where education and art have a place in every home;
Where worth and not wealth gives standing to men;
Where the power of character lifts men to leadership;
Where interest in public affairs is a test of citizenship and devotion to the public weal is a badge of honor;
Where government is always honest and efficient and the principles of democracy find their fullest and truest expression;
Where the people of all the earth can come and be blended into one community life, and where each generation will vie with the past to transmit to the next a city greater, better and more beautiful than the last.

--Mayo Fesler.

From "The Rotarian."

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